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ABSTRACT

This guide is written for those seeking help from federal programs to foster innovative enterprises in agriculture and forestry in the United States. The guide describes program resources in value-added and diversified agriculture and forestry, sustainable land management, and community development. Programs are included based upon whether they offer significant funding or technical assistance. The guide is organized by the type of assistance and resources that federal programs offer to support agricultural and forestry innovations. Sections cover: (1) research, information, new technologies, and extension education; (2) financing; (3) business management (including small farmer training); (4) marketing; (5) land and resource management and conservation; and (6) community and rural development. Along with a general overview of each resource, the guide explains what each program offers, gives specific examples of how the program has actually supported such work, describes uses and restrictions, presents eligibility information, and gives contact information. Additional programs, whose relevance may be limited to a small audience, can be found in a special section. The final section presents general information resources, including the Consumer Information Center and Catalog, the National Agricultural Library Information Resource Centers, and the USDA Rural Development Offices. (TD)

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ED 450 988

# Building Better Rural Places

## Federal programs for sustainable agriculture, forestry, conservation and community development

A publication of the U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies
working together for sustainable rural development

in collaboration with

The Michael Fields Agricultural Institute

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Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

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RC 022833

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The effort to foster collaboration and partnerships among USDA agencies in support of sustainable community development is championed by the Rural Economic Development Action Team, the National RC&D Working Group, and the Council on Sustainable Development at USDA. Among other federal, state, and local partners are the National Rural Development Partnership, State Rural Development Councils, and RC&D Councils. We appreciate the hard work and cooperation of members of all of these entities in supporting the development of this guide. The guide could not have been completed for its first edition without the support and leadership of SARE directors, past and present, from Rob Myers and Jerry DeWitt to Jill Auburn. This revised edition owes special thanks to Jill Auburn and to Teresa Maurer, Manager of the Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA) program, for their commitment to providing staff and other resources to help research, update and print the guide and to maintain its presence on the ATTRA website.

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# Introduction

## Guide to This Guide

### *Who Should Use the Guide?*

This guide is written for anyone seeking help from federal programs to foster innovative enterprises in agriculture and forestry in the United States. Specifically, the guide addresses program resources in value-added and diversified agriculture and forestry, sustainable land management, and community development. Thus, it can help farmers, entrepreneurs, community developers, conservationists, and many other individuals, as well as private and public organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit. The guide also aims to help USDA and other agency employees become aware of and take better advantage of the enormous array of federal programs and resources available to support agricultural and forestry innovations.

### *How Can the Guide Help You?*

We hope to introduce you to programs that will help advance your work. We have included descriptions of federal programs or resources that may create opportunities or provide assistance in adding value, diversifying, or adopting more sustainable practices in agricultural and forest product enterprises. Along with a general overview of each resource, the guide explains what each program offers and, wherever possible, gives specific examples of how the program has actually supported such work.

### *How is the Guide Organized?*

The guide is organized by the type of assistance and resources that federal programs offer to support agricultural and forestry innovations. (See p. x for a blueprint of how the book is organized.) These include resources in the categories of research and information; financing; business management; marketing; land and resource management; and community development. Programs are often represented in more than one category, such as when a program offers assistance pertaining both to research and community development, for example. When this occurs, the program is fully described in the section where it is first relevant and is referenced in future sections. Additional programs, whose relevance may be limited to a small segment of the guide s intended audience, can be found in a special section at the end.

We have included programs based upon whether they offer significant funding or technical assistance to support agricultural and forestry innovations, particularly those related to value-added and diversified enterprises, sustainable land and resource management, and community development.

In choosing programs for this guide, we sought suggestions from many whom this guide is designed to serve. But undoubtedly some relevant programs escaped our attention. Further, although these program descriptions are accurate as of this printing, we expect that aspects of some programs will change. Please check programs Internet websites, when available, for program updates and applications.

### *Why Address Innovations?*

Both agriculture and forestry are undergoing enormous change in response to technological, trade, social, regulatory and economic forces. Perhaps it is not surprising, given such sweeping changes, that the customary livelihoods of many in agriculture and forestry are disrupted and threatened. It is also true, however, that periods of upheaval in an industry often have produced great innovations and creative leaps forward. We see particular potential in the movements toward building local businesses that add value to agricultural and forestry resources; improving land and resource management; and stimulating community-based local economic development. These innovations can help create profitable opportunities for entrepreneurs and operators of all scales in agriculture and forestry.

### *What are Value-Added Strategies and Why Pursue Them?*

Communities that specialize in the simple extraction of local bio-based inputs sometimes seek to gain and retain greater value from those natural resources. They may pursue a variety of value-added approaches, such as processing, packaging, marketing, and distributing products derived from local natural resources.

Since earnings in simple extractive industries (agricultural production and timber harvesting in particular) may be low and highly volatile, the addition of such downstream activities can improve a community's economic and environmental sustainability. Value-added enterprises represent excellent business development opportunities for farming, forest-based and other rural communities because a community located near raw inputs can turn its location into a competitive advantage and build on local job skills. With declining employment in farming and forestry, workers leaving these industries are more likely to be able transfer their skills to value-added enterprises than to non-farm manufacturing and service industries. Creating value-added jobs can improve the diversity of the local economy, increase local incomes, capture higher profits locally, and use the local natural resource base more efficiently and sustainably.

The guide is organized with a logic that may be helpful for people seeking resources to support value-added enterprises. The guide's first four sections follow the progressive stages of developing a new enterprise. Thus, it begins with resources providing information, then proceeds to financial, business management, and marketing assistance. This logic aims to help you consider your own needs in a systematic way.

### *What Motivates Sustainable Land Management Practices?*

Increasing numbers of farmers, foresters, and other landowners are seeking to manage their lands using practices that are both environmentally and economically sound. Many farmers, for example, want to reduce their use of pesticides, protect their soil, or improve habitat for wildlife, while maintaining or increasing the profitability of their land. Other landowners, not necessarily farmers, simply aim to protect their land from development pressures. For some, interest in these practices grows from an increasingly regulatory environment. (For example, the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 in the next few years will remove several commonly used pesticides, encouraging alternative forms of pest management.) Still other farmland owners are inspired to seek new practices because of personal concerns about environmental degradation or because they hope to gain better returns in the marketplace as a reward for producing commodities in environmentally sustainable systems.

This guide offers landowners help in pursuing a wide variety of strategies in land management that combine environmental and economic concerns. These include the following: intensive rotational grazing of livestock, erecting soil conserving structures; establishing organic or biodynamic farming systems; implementing integrated pest management (IPM); diversifying crops and otherwise strengthening crop rotations; restoring wetlands, native prairie or other habitat; and many other strategies.

### *What Does Community Development Entail?*

All communities suffer from losing physical and economic resources. Both rural and urban commuities are concerned about job creation, increasing social stability and raising the standard of living of their citizens. These needs translate into a broad array of initiatives, from spawning new businesses through such mechanisms as incubators to training programs, job creation, market development, and road-building or other infrastructural improvements. In this process, localities often seek the types of federal economic and technical assistance described in this guide.

## Strategies for Using Federal Programs

### *What Makes a Successful Proposal for Federal Funding?*

A successful federally funded project, such as a research proposal, conservation plan or marketing strategy, is no different from any other good project. It has tightly defined purposes, a clear strategy to accomplish them on a realistic timeline, the necessary people, money, and other resources, a basis for evaluating the process throughout, and an effective means of communicating results. Many projects are improved by a thoughtful effort to build supporting coalitions. In fact, a funder will often look favorably on, and may require, local matches of funding, whether in staff salaries, in-kind contributions or actual dollars.

In designing a good project, be sure that you have included the right people in the planning process itself.

Some starting questions to consider in developing your proposal include the following:

What problem do you seek to address?

What is your principal strategy to resolve that problem?

Why is this strategy better than other approaches you might consider?

Have other people, locally or otherwise, addressed this problem? If so, what have you learned from their work, and how does your effort relate to theirs?

Who else might be concerned about your issues? Should they be involved in your project?

What's a realistic timeline for action?

What resources do you need to implement your project? What resources can you use for a non-federal match?

Would others profit from knowing about your initiative? If so, how do you plan to get the word out?

How will you measure and evaluate your project's outcomes?

## *Identifying and Meeting Federal Programs Halfway*

Once you've got a good idea of what your project should look like and what resources it requires, it's time to explore federal programs and figure out what programs, if any, can help you achieve your goals. This guide is designed for just that activity. In doing this, remember that few programs were designed for needs precisely like yours. To avoid chasing programs that have incompatible goals and increase your chances of funding, invest time in researching how well your project fits within various programs.

First, identify programs in this guide and from other sources whose purposes and available resources seem most suitable to your purposes. It's wise to think creatively about your project's needs. The problems for which you seek help are likely complex, and often more than one program may contribute to their solution. For example, you may think your problem can best be solved by applying to a grant or loan program. But don't forget that technical assistance, information, conservation cost-share and other resources may strengthen your project as well. So be sure to consider your needs broadly.

Besides this guide, there are many ways to locate resources that may be useful to you. The reference section of larger public libraries, most universities' main libraries, and the development office of any large university often have copies of many useful directories, some dealing with private sources and others with federal ones. Just a few include *The Foundation Directory*, the *National Directory of Corporate Giving, Complete Grants Sourcebook for Higher Education; Directory of Research Grants; Funding Sources for Community and Economic Development; Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance; The Federal Register; Federal Support for Nonprofits; Government Assistance Almanac; Government Giveaways for Entrepreneurs; Guide to Federal Funding for Governments and Nonprofits*; and the *Guide to Federal Funding for Education*. Many of these resources are available on the Internet. A few Internet addresses are noted here. The *Catalog of Federal Assistance* is at **http://www.gsa.gov/fdac.** FEDIX offers information and access to free federal grant searches for education and research by agency, subject, and specific interest groups at **http://www.fie.com.** And the Research Administrators Resources Network is at **http://sra.rams.com/cws/sra/resource.htm**. Private funding sources are catalogued through The Foundation Center at **http://fdncenter.org**.

Further, many other private and public resources exist at the state and local levels, but are not covered here. Contact your state Department of Agriculture, state forester, local Extension Office and local Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) coordinator to explore those possibilities. Also, asking yourself who might have a stake in the outcomes of your work can sometimes lead to additional potential funding sources.

Figure out where your needs and federal programs' defined purposes overlap. Get as much information as you can about past projects these programs have funded or collaborated with. You may want to talk with program staff, people previously funded, or organizations that have worked with a program, to understand better whether there is a fit and if so, how to argue for it.

Try to figure out clearly what factors, in addition to a thoughtfully assembled project proposal, determine funding or a successful collaboration. Examples might include relevance of your topic to a program's current "hot topics," geographical location, extent of non-federal funding match, support from state or federal agencies or political representatives, and so forth. There will be factors you can t control, so be sure to excel in the ones you can.

### *Hints for Submitting Federal Applications*

Once you ve designed a good project, prepare it for submission to any program to which you re applying so that it stands the greatest chance of being approved. Make sure it s written according to specified format requirements. Identify your central points, including how your proposal addresses a program s key goals. Be precise and accurate; don t be tempted to exaggerate the need or over-promise results. Use clear, concise language to make your application or proposal readable. It s smart to have it reviewed by someone whose editing skills you trust. Is it clear? Readable? Grammatical? Pay close attention to formatting, deadline, non-federal monetary match and other stated requirements. Be sure that your budget is accurate, clear, and is accompanied by a budget narrative to clarify any points you think might be misunderstood by reviewers. And, of course, be prepared to readjust your proposal for each program to which you submit it.

Make sure you understand the review process. Is it based on only a few people, or is it comprehensive? If the contact person makes funding decisions, get to know their preferences. Under any circumstances, be pleasant and non-combative in discussing your project.

Finally, but very important don t be discouraged! Many successfully funded grants and applications for federal resources are the result of earlier failed attempts. Understanding why your earlier efforts were rejected is likely to help in future ones, so seek that information from program staff if it is not automatically sent to you.

## Getting a Copy of the Guide

To obtain a free copy of *Building Better Rural Places*, please contact **Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA),** P.O. Box 3657, Fayetteville, AR 72702, 1-800-346-9140; fax (501) 442-9842; email: askattra@ncatark.uark.edu. You may also find the entire guide on ATTRA s website at **www.attra.org**.

## Workshops on Using the Guide

Want to learn more about how to secure federal funding to support sustainable agriculture enterprises? Upon reuest, the Micheael Fields Agricultural Institute will conduct a training workshop in your area. You will learn how to conceptualize projects, how to identify programs offering resources and how to maximize the chances of getting proposals funded by federal agencies. For more information, contact Margaret Krome, agricultural policy coordinator for the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, 2524 Chamberlain Ave., Madison, WI 53705; (608) 238-1440; (608) 238-1569 - fax; mkrome@inxpress.net

# I. Research, Information and New Technologies

**Also see:**

**Cooperative Services**
**The Forest Service's Economic Recovery Program**
**The Forest Service's Rural Development Program**
**Urban and Community Forestry**

# Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)

## *Free Technical Information Provided to Producers on a Wide Variety of Alternative Crops and Sustainable Farming Topics*

ATTRA is the national sustainable farming information center located at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and in Butte, Montana. ATTRA provides information free-of-charge through telephone requests from those engaged in or serving commercial agriculture, such as farmers, Extension agents, university researchers, farm organizations, and agribusinesses. ATTRA can provide a wide variety of information on sustainable or alternative agriculture, from horticultural and agronomic crops to livestock and farming systems. ATTRA s goal is to help U.S. farmers boost profits and provide healthier food for consumers, while becoming better stewards of the precious natural resources and environment of America s farmlands. Since its inception in 1987, ATTRA s staff of friendly, resourceful specialists has prepared more than 135,000 reports for callers on how to:

Improve farm income with a diversity of crops/livestock

Reduce dependence on costly off-farm inputs

Assess new direct marketing methods

Produce alternative crops and livestock

Institute organic farming practices

Incorporate value-added and farm-processed products

Improve soil fertility and water quality

Rejuvenate rural America through agricultural enterprises

## Information Available

ATTRA specializes in responding to questions on specific sustainable enterprises or practices. Staff will research the question, summarize findings in writing, and compile supporting literature as appropriate to accompany the report which a caller receives by mail. In addition to providing customized research, ATTRA offers three types of prepared materials which are often updated: Information Packages, Current Topics in Sustainable Agriculture, and Resource Lists.

An Information Package contains a 5-20 page topic review written by ATTRA specialists and may also include enclosures, bibliographies, and supply sources. A Current Topic is shorter than an Information Package and usually focuses more on a particular topic of interest rather than providing an overview, and contains few, if any, enclosures for further reading.

A Resource List is designed to make networking easier for organizations, individuals and companies interested in sustainable agriculture.

## Legislative Authority

The Food Security Act of 1985

## Financial Information

Funding for fiscal year 2000 is $1.5 million through USDA s Rural Business-Cooperative Service to support the informational and educational work of ATTRA s 25-member staff. The program is operated by the nonprofit National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT).

## Eligibility

ATTRA provides information to farmers, extension agents, university researchers, farm organizers, and agribusinesses as well as other information providers.

ATTRA cannot handle requests for conventional agricultural information or requests by home gardeners ond other people not actually involved in or serving commercial agriculture.

## Uses and Restrictions

ATTRA provides information and publications on sustainable and alternative agriculture. For other information, please contact local services, such as the county Extension office.

## Contact

ATTRA prefers requests by telephone. Contact the national program office for assistance and to request information.

National Program Office
P.O. Box 3657
Fayetteville, AR 72702
1-800-346-9140
(501) 442-9824
(501) 442-9842 - fax

## Internet

www.attra.org

A growing number of ATTRA's publications, resource lists and other materials are available on our web site, which also links to newsletters and other web sites related to sustainable agriculture.

# Cooperative Extension System (CES)

## *A Partnership Effort in Information Delivery and Educational Support Programs*

The partnership occurs among federal, state, and county governments who all provide funding support and management direction to the nation s cooperative extension system.

The CES network links the research and education programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the land-grant universities in each state and to county-level government. The structure and services provided by extension are largely determined at the state and county levels, and vary accordingly. USDA, which has its link to extension through the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) agency, provides only general guidelines and coordination of the extension system, as well as partial funding.

A user can contact CES either at the state or county level, or both. State extension specialists, who are also university faculty, provide in-depth information on a variety of technical subjects, including many agriculture, natural resource, and household/family topics. More than 9,600 local extension agents work in 3,150 U.S. counties. In addition to paid extension staff, trained volunteers work with a number of programs, such as the youth-oriented 4-H programs.

The type of information available through extension offices and programs is very comprehensive, and usually tailored in part to local information needs. In general, information and some technical assistance are available on agriculture, forestry, gardening, household, family, and youth topics. Extension does not normally provide financial assistance, but instead focuses on information delivery through the Internet, printed publications and newsletters, broadcast media, staff presentations at public meetings, and one-on-one assistance in person or by phone with information seekers. In some locations, diagnostic services are available for soil testing and garden or farm pests. Most extension publications and programs are available for free or at nominal cost through county or university extension offices or via Internet web sites.

## Project Examples

The CES has responded over the years to hundreds of thousands of questions and inquiries on literally thousands of topics, as well as proactively delivering educational programs. There are no national level extension initiatives at this time on value-added agriculture or diversification. However, printed literature and some staff expertise relevant to these topics is available in most states. Many states have extension publications on alternative agricultural crops, sometimes emphasizing horticultural alternatives, sometimes alternative field crops, and sometimes alternative enterprises such as Christmas tree or mushroom production. Usually information is available in each state on developing a farm enterprise budget and/or beginning a small business. Information not available in printed form may be obtained by talking to one or more extension staff at the county or state level and asking for a resource person familiar with these topics.

## Legislative Authority

The First Morrill Act, passed in 1862, established a network of public institutions known as the "land-grant colleges and universities." The Smith-Lever Act in 1914 created the Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service (a partnership among Federal, state, and county governments), which now functions as the Cooperative Extension System. The Second Morrill Act provided additional appropriations for the original 1862 land-grant institutions as well as stimulating establishment of the 1890 land-grant institutions. The Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 designated certain tribal colleges as land grant institutions ("1994 Institutions").

## Application and Financial Information

There is generally no financial assistance available through extension and thus no application forms. There are a variety of methods to obtain extension publications. Most county extension offices have available for free or at low cost copies of the extension publications available in the state, and call-in or walk-in assistance can be provided. Typically, a state-level extension publications office has a list of all currently available extension publications in that state, plus some that are regional extension publications, and will take publications orders by phone or mail. Contacting an extension technical staff person can lead to that person providing publications by mail. Many publications are available at state or county fairs, or other public extension events. Also, a neighboring state often will have extension publications covering different topics which are available to anyone, sometimes for a slightly higher fee to non-residents (get the number of other state extension publication offices from the one in your state). Many states make their publications available via the World Wide Web. If you have Internet access go to: www.e-answers.org to see if your state s extension materials are available in electronic format. Finally, over the phone or walk-in technical assistance and other value-added topics is available from extension offices.

## Eligibility

CSREES programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, gender, disability, religion, age or national origin. Specific eligibility requirements can vary by program.

## Contact

Contact your local county extension office (see your local government in the telephone directory), a land-grant university (call the university s main information number and ask for the extension administration office, extension publications office, or the agriculture extension office) or the national agency office listed here.

National Program Office
Dr. Colien Hefferan, Administrator
Cooperative State Research, Education, and
Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
800 9th Street, S.W.
4014 Waterfront Centre
Washington, D.C. 20250-2215
(202) 720-5384
(202) 720-8987 - fax

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov

# Forest Products Conservation and Recycling (FPC&R)

## *Technology Transfer and Technical and Marketing Assistance to Improve Processing of Forest Products and Utilization of Wood Wastes and Residues*

The Forest Service s Forest Products Conservation and Recycling (FPC&R) program supports technical specialists in the Forest Service Regional Offices and the FPC&R Technology Marketing Unit at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, WI. These specialists assist State Foresters, communities, and businesses in activities that encourage and facilitate the wise, efficient use of forest resources to enhance economic development and stimulate better stewardship of the forest resource. Technology transfer plus technical and marketing assistance are provided to increase economic opportunities through market and community development; reduced environmental impact of harvesting and processing forest products; improved utilization of wood wastes and residues; extended useful life of forest products; and improved understanding of forest resource values. Financial assistance is not provided by FPC&R; however, FPC&R activities are often associated with state- or community-based projects funded by the Forest Service s Economic Recovery or Rural Development programs. These activities generally fall into three categories:

> Conservation activities encourage stewardship through conservation--the wise care for and use of forest products to protect a sustainable, diverse forest resource. Wise use strengthens markets, which increases values and creates incentives for proper forest management to improve the quality of the resource. Technical assistance and technology transfer efforts are targeted toward increasing the understanding of forest resource values; implementing technologies which improve environmental sensitivity of harvesting and processing forest products; and increasing the useful life of forest products.
>
> Value-Added and Alternative Products activities encourage and facilitate increased economic returns from forest assets by providing technical and marketing assistance to communities and businesses. The principal aim is to increase value-added forest product processing which create long-term, sustainable jobs. Activities include: drying or finishing wood products; adding new product lines; improving product quality or productivity; and creating new business ventures to expand and serve markets for the many hundreds of nontraditional (special) forest products ranging from pine straw, pine boughs, bear grass, honey, and mushrooms.
>
> Recycling activities target wood and wood fiber wastes and residues currently being land-filled or underutilized. They support efforts to find ways to use this material for value-added products, bio-energy, or chemicals and market new or adapt existing products. Mill residue reduction through increased efficiency and opportunities for reuse of wood fiber based products are also key focus areas.

The FPC&R Technology Marketing Unit (TMU) focuses on disseminating and marketing the forest products technology and research capabilities of the Forest Service. The TMU uses an interactive technology transfer approach for working in collaboration with researchers and local governments, private landowners, and forest industries to uncover problems and needs facing these user groups and provide a technological solution. It supports the unique national and international research mission of the Forest Service in forest products utilization and structural and chemical engineering research by ensuring ready adoption of wood-based material technologies developed at the Forest Products Laboratory and other Forest Service research installations. TMU s mission includes manufacturing, marketing, conserving, and recycling of forest-based products. Its objectives and activities include:

> Extending the wood resource through implementation of new technologies for efficient use of wood and fiber-based materials.
>
> Forming partnerships and coordinate technology transfer programs to pilot forest products technology adoption.
>
> Providing consultative support for licensing and commercialization of Forest Service inventions with significant resource implications.

Communicating needs for new technology by private industry, landowners, and other governmental units to research units for their use in establishing research directions.

Maintaining a network of private and governmental forest products technology utilization specialists as a vehicle for disseminating research information, to obtain input on resource utilization needs, and to promote dialogue between user and researcher.

Developing and applying new systems to increase productivity and efficiency in dissemination of technical information to industry, environmental, governmental, and consumer groups, educators, and individuals.

## Project Examples

In addition to assisting individual projects, FPC&R has conducted a number of workshops on the financing, marketing and feasibility of engineered wood products and special forest products; improved solid wood utilization; waste wood and paper recycling; and lumber manufacturing quality improvement, among others.

## Information Available

The *FPC&R Review* is a distillation of new forest products technology, upcoming meetings and workshops, and emerging issues. This is distributed electronically and mailed (hard copy) through the FPC&R network to Forest Service personnel, USDA Extension System, State Utilization and Marketing specialists, RC&D Councils, and other affiliated programs interested in developing markets for forest products.

## Legislative Authority

Section 3 of the Cooperative Forestry Act of 1978, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

No direct financial assistance is provided under this program; see entries for the Forest Service s Rural Development and Economic Recovery programs.

## Eligibility

Any individual, business or public entity is eligible to receive technical assistance within the scope of the program.

## Uses and Restrictions

This program provides technical information, advice, and related assistance to private forest landowners and managers, vendors, forest resource operators, forest resource professionals, public agencies and individuals to enable such persons to carry out the management of resources of forest lands, including harvesting, processing and marketing of timber and other forest resources and the marketing and utilization of wood and wood products; and the conversion of wood to energy for domestic, industrial, municipal, and other uses.

## Contact

For more information, contact the regional office of the Forest Service near you (see the contact list in the entry for Wood in Transportation) or contact the Forest Products Laboratory:

FPC&R Technology Marketing Unit
Forest Products Laboratory
Madison, Wisconsin
(608) 231-9200
(608) 231-9592 (fax)
Email: tmu/fpl@fs.fed.us

National Program Office
Cooperative Forestry
USDA Forest Service
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
(202) 205-1383
(202) 205-0975 - fax

## Internet

www.fpl.fs.fed.us/rwus/fpcr.htm

# Forest Products Laboratory (FPL)

## *Information on Commercial Technological Opportunities, Research and Development Partnerships, and Wood Products*

The Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory (FPL), established in 1910 in Madison, Wis., serves as a centralized wood research laboratory. Its role is to improve the use of wood through science and technology, thereby contributing to the conservation, management, conversion and use of the forest resource. FPL's research programs are accomplished through coordinated partnerships involving industry, university, and government. When beneficial to public interests, innovations developed at the Forest Products Laboratory are patented and licensed for use in private companies for commercial application. The Forest Service Patent Program coordinates its services with the USDA Office of Technology Transfer.

The Forest Products Conservation & Recycling Technology Marketing Unit helps bring FPL's research to potential users by matching customer needs with existing research or guiding new research. Development of cooperative projects provides enhanced benefits to private sector participants through leveraging of R&D funds and bring greater efficiency to public dollars expended for new research.

Current research and technology transfer are conducted in the following areas:

Biodiversity and Biosystematics of Fungi

Decay Processes and Bioprocessing

Durability

General

Papermaking and Paper Recycling

Recycling of Wood Products

Properties and Use of Wood, Composites, and Fiber Products

Surface Chemistry

Timber and Fiber Demand and Technology Assessment

Wood Chemistry

Special Items

## Project Examples

Project examples that relate to value-added wood products and commercial applications of FPL technologies include:

FPL is investigating the potential of economically utilizing low-grade hardwood lumber and processing residuals for structural components, such as trusses and I-joists. This research opens a new source of raw material for structural products and reduces pressure on the softwood forest resource. Producers of hardwood lumber could increase profitability if a high percentage of the hardwood resource was converted to high-value products and if they had more lucrative markets for residual materials. This technology holds promise for both increasing utilization efficiency and providing jobs and stabilizing rural economies.

Most paper production involves the use of environmentally-damaging chemicals for both pulping and bleaching. FPL researchers are developing alternative processing technologies that will reduce the environmental impact of papermaking. Research is underway to develop the most effective technologies for utilizing microbial enzymes to bleach pulp. Another promising technology involves the use of polyoxometalates, a class of nontoxic chemical compounds, for both bleaching and pulping. This technology has recently been found to be a promising basis for effluent-free bleaching as well as an effective, environmentally-friendly replacement for conventional pulping chemicals.

The FPL is working with the U.S. Postal Service to ensure that the extremely popular pressure-sensitive adhesive stamps pose no problems to recycling of postal materials. Currently, most pressure-sensitive adhesives in general use create major removal problems to mills recycling recovered papers. FPL researchers are working with the U.S. Postal Service, companies using recycled fiber for papermaking, pressure-sensitive adhesive suppliers, and recycling equipment suppliers to evaluate the recycling performance of current and new pressure-sensitive adhesive formulations that will be compatible with recovered papermaking mill processing operations.

To maintain forest health and productivity, small-diameter and underutilized material needs to be removed. However, there is little market demand for this material, as evidenced by the lack of bids on timber sales containing this material. The FPL is gearing research toward developing marketable uses for this material. As a result, projects are underway in communities throughout the United States to increase the demand for small-diameter wood. Many communities will benefit by having sustainable new industries based on a resource that is inexpensive and available, and forest managers will benefit because small-diameter material will become more valuable, which in turn will help them recover the costs of removing this material from the forest.

Recycling waste preservative-treated wood into high-value composite products has traditionally been limited by technical barriers. Much preservative-treated wood contains chromium-based preservatives, such as chromated copper arsenate (CCA) that interfere with the adhesives used in composite manufacturing. FPL researchers created a patented coupling agent that overcomes this interference and can be used to manufacture flakeboards from CCA-treated wood. CCA-treated flakeboards would be well suited for use in high-decay risk applications, and represent a more efficient and environmentally sensitive use of wood resources than landfilling.

## Information Available

FPL publishes research findings useful to the general public, industry, regulatory agencies, state and private foresters, educators, and other government agencies and organizations. It has published thousands of technical reports and several major USDA handbooks. More than 100 scholarly journals publish its research results. Publications are available on the FPL website (http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/).

## Legislative Authority

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. S 1641-1647), as amended. Agreements are authorized by many different statutes.

## Application and Financial Information

Potential users should call, write, fax, or e-mail for assistance in locating technical resources. FPL staff will provide information upon request, help develop the information required, or help identify alternative sources of information or expertise.

## Eligibility

Information on commercial opportunities and technology transfer programs can be provided upon request.

## Uses and Restrictions

FPL does not provide financial assistance to the private sector in the development of cooperative agreements. FPL can assist private sector partners in locating appropriate sources of capital either through other USDA agencies or participating state government incentive programs.

## Contact

For more information about resources and opportunities, contact:

National Program Office
USDA, Forest Service FPL
One Gifford Pinchot Drive
Madison, WI 53705-2398
(608) 231-9200
(608) 231-9592 - fax

## Internet

www.fpl.fs.fed.us/

# Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS)

***Grants for Research, Extension and Education to Address Emerging Agricultural Issues Related to Future Food Production, Environmental Quality and Natural Resources Management and Farm Income***

Grants awarded must address priority mission areas related to: (a) Agricultural genome, (b) Food safety, food technology and human nutrition, (c) New and alternative uses and production of agricultural commodities and products, (d) Agricultural biotechnology, (e) Natural resource management, including precision agriculture, and (f) Farm efficiency and profitability, including the viability and competitiveness of small- and medium-sized dairy, livestock, crop, and other commodity operations.

Priority is given to projects that are multistate, multi-institutional, or multidisciplinary and projects that integrate agricultural research, extension and education. IFAFS is distinct from other CSREES programs because of its priority on integrating research, extension, and education; its consideration of the concerns of small and mid-sized operations; its emphasis on agricultural production issues; and its goal to support relatively large projects that provide more intensive support to the research, extension, and education system.

## Project Examples

In IFAFS first year, five projects addressing whole-farm approaches to improve profitability included organic farming efforts in Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, North Carolina, and Iowa and targeted small farm initiatives in Iowa, Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Mississippi.

Two projects spanning Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee aim to improve beef cattle production, marketing systems and value-added products. A New England consortium of service providers assisting beginning farmers explores issues of farm scale. A Southwestern U.S. project aims to reduce labor requirements and increase profitability of domestic chili pepper production. Research and extension on raising hybrid catfish in hillside ponds of the Southeast aims to develop a new source of farm income.

A Florida research and education project seeks to better manage phosphorus in the Suwannee River watershed.

Projects to develop new uses for agricultural crops include improving production systems for biobased fuels; increasing efficiencies of converting biomass into a feasible substitute for petroleum feedstock for a variety of products; and further developing biobased solvents for de-inking recyclable paper, environmentally friendly paint-strippers, non-allergenic latex products, and crop-based grease and lubricant products.

## Legislative Authority

Section 401 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA)

## Application and Financial Information

Typically the program s request for proposals (RFP) is published in the Federal Register in January, proposals are due in March, and awards are made in August. To receive e-mail notification of RFP publication and other IFAFS announcements, send an e-mail message to <majordomo@reeusda.gov>. Leave the subject blank. In the message space write: subscribe ifafs-pubs

Grants may be funded at between $1 and 5 million over 4 years. If a grant provides for applied research that is commodity-specific and not of national scope, the grantee must provide funds or in-kind support to match the amount of federal grant funds provided.

The IFAFS program disbursed about $113 million in grants in Fiscal Year 2000; the same is expected in FY 2001. First year funds were distributed in the following priority areas: Agriculture Genome and Agricultural Biotechnology ($31.8 million); Food Safety, Food Technology, and Human Nutrition ($21.9 million); New and Alternative Uses and Production of Agricultural Commodities and Products ($9 million); Natural Resource Management, including Precision Agriculture ($30.9 million); and Farm Efficiency and Profitability, Including the Viability and Competitiveness of Small- and Medium-sized Dairy, Livestock, Crop, and Other Commodity Operations ($18.8 million).

## Eligibility

In the project s first year, eligible grantees included Federal research agencies, national laboratories, colleges and universities or research foundations maintained by a college or university, or a private research organization with an established and demonstrated capacity to perform research or technology transfer. Grants could also be awarded to ensure that faculty of small and mid-sized institutions that had not previously been successful in obtaining competitive grants under subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C 450i(b)) (i.e. the CSREES National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program) received a portion of the IFAFS grants.

As of this writing, eligible institutions will change beginning in IFAFS s second year. Unless altered, language in the Fiscal Year 2001 appropriations bill directs that only Land-Grant and Hispanic Serving Institutions will be eligible to receive grants directly from this program. As before, farmers, nonprofit organizations and other collaborators may be sub-grantees to these eligible grantees.

## Uses and Restrictions

Funds may not be used to renovate or refurbish research spaces; purchase or install fixed equipment in such spaces; or plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construct buildings or facilities.

## Contact

Dr. Rodney Foil, Director
IFAFS Program
1400 Independence Avenue., SW
4309 Waterfront Center
Washington, D.C. 20250
(202) 720-4423
E-mail: rfoil@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov/ifafs/

# Integrated Research, Education and Extension Competitive Grants Program

## (also known as the "Section 406" program)

***A mechanism within USDA for funding activities on a wide variety of potential topics that integrate research and extension with education.***

In 1998, Congress authorized the establishment of a competitive grant program to fund integrated, multifunctional agricultural research, extension, and education activities. The Secretary may award grants to colleges and universities (as defined by section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)) for projects that address priorities in U.S. agriculture involving integrated research, education, and extension activities, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board. The program is administered through the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES).

Individual programs funded and amounts of funding under the Section 406 funding mechanism may vary from fiscal year to fiscal year, depending on topics of highest priority to congressional appropriators.

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### Project Examples

Congress appropriated Fiscal Year 2001 (FY01) funding for Section 406 Integrated Programs for activities at the following levels: $13 million for Water Quality; $15 million for Food Safety; $4.5 million for Pesticide Impact Assessment; $1.5 million for Crops at Risk from FQPA Implementation; $4.9 million for FQPA Risk Mitigation Program for Major Crop Systems; $2.5 for Methyl Bromide Transition Program; and $500,000 for Organic Transitions. These were similar to programs funded and the levels at which they were funded in FY2000. However, in future fiscal years, new programs might be added, others de-funded, or funding levels changed.

### Legislative Authority

Section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7626)

### Eligibility, Application and Financial Information

Eligible institutions include colleges and universities (as defined by section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)). Beyond this, each activity or program noted below or any likely to be funded in the future through Section 406 funding - has its own call for proposals, application process, and any more specific eligibility requirements. For more information, contact program coordinators as noted below.

### Contact

Call or e-mail the coordinator for each program as noted below. During 2001 or 2002 an overall coordinator for Section 406 or Integrated Programs may be assigned.

Water Quality Contact
Mike O Neill
(202) 205-5952, moneill@reeusda.gov

National Food Safety Initiative Contact:
Jan Singleton
(202) 401-1954, jsingleton@reeusda.gov

Pesticide Impact Assessment Pest Management Centers Contact:
Dr. Dennis Kopp
(202) 401-5437, dkopp@reeusda.gov

Crops at Risk from FQPA Implementation (CAR) Contact
Dr H.J. Rick Meyer
(202) 401-4891, hmeyer@reeusda.gov

FQPA Risk Avoidance and Mitigation Program for Major Food Crop Systems (RAMP) Contact
Mike Fitzner
(202) 401-4939, mfitzner@reeusda.gov

Methyl Bromide Transition Contact
Tom Bewick
(202) 401-3356, tbewick@reeusda.gov

Organic Transitions Contact
Anne Bertinuson
(202) 401-6825, abertinuson@reeusda.gov

## Internet

As of late 2000, CSREES was revamping its web site, so we can t provide a website for the Integrated Activities Program at this time. Go to the CSREES home page at www.reeusda.gov for updates on this program.

# National Agroforestry Center (NAC)

## *Develops and Disseminates Agroforestry Technologies and Information*

The USDA National Agroforestry Center (NAC), representing a partnership of the USDA Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, was authorized by Congress in the 1990 Farm Bill to accelerate the development and application of agroforestry technologies to attain more economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable land-use systems. The Center acts as a catalyst organization to involve cooperators and stakeholders in all aspects of agroforestry technology development through cooperative research and development, technology transfer and applications, and international exchange.

Agroforestry is defined as the intentional growing of trees and shrubs in combination with crops or forage. It also includes tree and shrub plantings on farms and ranches that improve habitat value for humans and wildlife, or that provide woody plant products in addition to agricultural crops or forage. Agroforestry is distinguished from traditional forestry by having the additional aspect of a closely associated agricultural or forage crop. Agroforestry provides both income for the landowner and conservation/environmental enhancement benefits for the land. A key concept in agroforestry is Working Trees trees planted in a specific place for a specific purpose. Agroforestry practices include riparian buffer strips, streambank bioengineering, alley cropping, windbreaks, grazing/timber systems, tree/specialty crop systems, living snowfences, forest farming, waste disposal systems and wildlife habitat plantings.

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## Information Available

Publications include:

*Inside Agroforestry*, a quarterly newsletter mailed to over 8,000 natural resource professionals.

*Agroforestry Working Trees Series*. Trees can perform many jobs for communities, farms, and ranches. They can increase farm or ranch income as well as promote conservation of land, water, and wildlife. Brochures illustrating a variety of uses for trees in those settings include: Working Trees for Agriculture, Working Trees for Communites, Working Trees for Wildlife, Working Trees for Livestock, and Working Trees for Waste.

*Agroforestry Technical Note Series*. Five main practices make up agroforestry. Several technical notes describing their application are available from the National Agroforestry Center, including:

★*Alley Cropping*: Growing annual crops between rows of trees;

★*Riparian Forest Buffers*: Protecting waters for nutrients, pesticides and sediments;

★*Forest Farming*: Producing specialty products like ginseng or shiitake mushrooms;

★*Windbreaks*: Providing conservation plus protecting crops, livestock and communities;

★*Silvopasture Systems*: Integrating timber production with livestock grazing; and

★*Special Applications*: Growing hybrid poplars; better managing wastewater and wildlife.

Working tree displays.

Videos such as *Green Side Up*, a three-module tree planting training video, and *Agroforestry: Agriculture & Forestry Working Together*

## Legislative Authority

Section 1243 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill).

## Application and Financial Information

The NAC co-funds small producer grants on agroforestry with the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program. Limited funding is also available for demonstrations and workshops.

## Eligibility

NAC s target audience is technical assistance providers. Any practitioner may seek technical information, educational materials, and training in agroforestry opportunities though NAC. These services are provided free of charge.

## Contact

For more information and assistance, you may contact the national program manager in Lincoln, Nebraska, or any of the following agroforesters:

Central and Northern Great Plains
Rich Straight, (402) 437-5178 ext. 24

Northeast and Midwest
Bruce Wight, (402) 437-5178 ext. 36
Mike Majeski, (651) 649-5240

South
Jim Robinson, (817) 334-5232 ext. 3624

West
Gary Kuhn, (509) 358-7946

National Program Office
Greg Ruark
Director
National Agroforestry Center
East Campus--UNL
Lincoln, NE 68583-0822
(402) 437-5178
(402) 437-5712 - fax

## Internet

www.unl.edu/nac

# National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program (NRICGP)

## *Grants for Research and Development for Sustainable Production Systems, New Uses and Added Value for Agricultural Products, and Revitalized Rural Economies*

The National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program (NRICGP) provides grants for research that will provide new knowledge for improved national agricultural competitiveness, sustainability, and economic performance; for credible environmental stewardship; for improved human health; and for the revitalization of rural communities. More specifically, research funded by proposals will form a broad base of knowledge for acceptable cost-effective improvements in agricultural products, processes, and practices, particularly for developing production systems that are sustainable both environmentally and economically; for finding new uses of agricultural products; for adding value to all stages of agricultural products; for enhancing competitiveness of agricultural products; for developing means to protect natural resources and wildlife; for optimizing livestock and crop health, quality, and productivity; for protecting human health and improving food safety.

There are nine program research division areas under the NRICGP. The research division areas that relate directly to sustainable value-added systems and diversification in agriculture and forest products are:

Markets, Trade and Rural Development

Enhancing Value and Use of Agricultural and Forest Products

Agricultural Systems Research

### *Markets, Trade and Rural Development*

The purpose of this Division is twofold. One is to support research to enhance the global marketability and competitiveness of U.S. agricultural, forest, and fish products. The second purpose of the Division is to develop and/or apply research methodologies to problems affecting economic welfare and quality of living of rural communities and people by examining the effects of international, national, and local policies. Research involves comparative analysis of the impacts of policy options and alternatives on natural resource use, population distribution, and the structure of rural society. The goal is to develop new economic development opportunities to sustain rural communities and people in the United States.

Rural areas dependent on agriculture, forestry, and other natural resource based industries have been subjected to various forces that reduce their economic vitality. This program calls for theoretical and empirical research to help understand the ways these forces affect economic vitality and evaluate how well public policies might restore the vitality. Research is supported in three general areas: (1) New theoretical and methodological studies to focus on improving the social and economic well-being of rural families and communities at the national, regional and local levels; (2) Empirical studies to identify the forces that influence population changes, employment, wage levels and other indicators of social an economic viability; and (3) Empirical evaluations of methods and policies to diversify the economics of rural areas, particularly those highly dependent on agriculture, forestry, and other natural resource extractive industries.

### *Enhancing Value and Use of Agricultural and Forest Products*

This division responds to the growing need to enhance the competitive value and quality of U.S. Agricultural and forest products. Research in this area builds the scientific base of knowledge to use agricultural and forest materials more fully and effectively. The Division supports both fundamental and applied research on new and improved processes and on development of new uses for agricultural and forest materials. Program Areas in this Division include: Value-Added Products Research encompassing Food and Non-Food Characterization/Process/Product Research, Biofuels Research, and Improved Utilization of Wood and Wood

Fiber.

### *Agricultural Systems*

Although agricultural research has most often focused on individual system elements, the Agricultural Systems program provides opportunities for integration of these elements through a systems research program. The objective is to obtain knowledge that is essential to sustain the viability of agriculture. Such research is needed to address directly interaction among the elements that comprise agricultural systems.
The program supports systems research that has the potential to aid in the development and/or evaluation of national, regional, community, and/or farm level practices and policies that will sustain: a safe and adequate supply of agricultural products and services; environmental quality and the natural resource base, human health, and the economic viability and quality of life of rural communities; and address linkages between urban and rural areas.

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## Project Examples

*Markets, Trade and Rural Development.* Situational Segmentation Opportunities for U.S. Fruit Exports to Japan, University of Arizona. This $103,122 grant was for studying U.S. fruit exports to Japan. Japanese fruit consumption often takes place in the context of snacking and gift giving. This project will assess situational factors that influence the snacking and gift giving distribution systems.

*Non-Food Characterization/Process/Product Research* Production of High Value Biodegradable Polymers in Tobacco, Auburn University. Grant of $120,000. Environmental problems require the development of biodegradable plastics which can be produced from renewable resource without the use of toxic and hazardous chemicals and which will help to solve the increasing global disposal problem. Every year a large surplus of agricultural raw materials are produced in the United States. High value products may be produced and harvested from the leafy biomass without any additional investment. Therefore, this project is designed to reduce reliance on petrochemicals while promoting the use of surplus agro-based raw materials to make environmentally friendly biodegradable plastics in plants. The primary goal of this project is to achieve low-cost production of protein-based polymers in plants.
*Agricultural Systems.* Farmer Goals and Management Strategies: Implication for Adoption of Sustainable Practices. A three-year grant of $185,911 to the University of California, Davis; Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. The overall goal of this three-year project is to identify the barriers and opportunities for the adoption of sustainable farming techniques using farmer goals, management styles and information inputs as the primary determinants. First, farmer goals and management styles will be identified using Q methodology. Management goals and styles will be related to the different production decisions that impact the sustainability of perennial crop production. Second, field and farm level economic and crop performance data will be compared using a variety of sources. Finally, the project will identify the information needs of conventional and biological farmers with respect to goals and management styles, and assess how well existing information delivery and education programs meet those needs. In total, this project will provide a better understanding of the management and information requirements of farmers, explain decision-making processes, compare performance across systems and aid in meeting growers long-term information needs.

## Application and Financial Information

The NRICGP solicits proposals that are single or multi-disciplinary; fundamental or mission-linked. The following definitions apply:

*Fundamental Research:* Research that tests scientific hypothesis and provides basic knowledge which allows advances in applied research and from which major conceptual breakthroughs are expected to occur.

*Mission-Linked Research:* Research on specifically identified agricultural problems which, although a continuum of efforts provides information and technology that may be transferred to users and may relate to a product, practice, or process.

*Multidisciplinary Research:* Research in which investigators from two or more disciplines are collaborating closely. These collaborations, where appropriate, may integrate the biological, physical, chemical, or social sciences.

The purpose of a grant application is to persuade the NRICGP and members of the scientific community who provide advice to the NRICGP that the proposed project is important, methodologically sound, and worthy of support. Therefore, the proposal must be submitted in response to one of the announced high-priority program areas. The application should be self-contained, should clearly present the merits of the proposed project, and should be written with care and thoroughness. It is important that all essential information for comprehensive evaluation be included. Omissions often result in processing delays and can jeopardize funding opportunities. Note that the deadline for FY 2000 submissions ended in November 1999. The submission deadline for FY 2001, will be November 15, 2000.

## Eligibility

Eligibility requirements for the NRICGP are as follows: Except where otherwise prohibited by law, State agricultural experiment stations, all colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, Federal agencies, private organizations or corporations, and individuals are eligible to apply for and to receive a competitive grant. Unsolicited proposals will not be considered and proposals from scientists at non-United States organizations will not be accepted.

In addition to the above, eligibility to receive a research grant award will be determined by the results of competitive peer evaluation. Only those proposals that are judged to be the most meritorious (within the limit of available funding) can be funded. Further, it must be determined that the applicant is a potentially responsible grantee. To qualify as responsible, an applicant must meet the following standards as they relate to a particular project:

- Adequate financial resources for performance, the necessary experience, organizational and technical qualifications, and facilities, or a firm commitment, arrangement, or ability to obtain such (including any to be obtained through subagreement(s));

- Ability to comply with the proposed or required completion schedule for the project;

- Satisfactory record of integrity, judgment, and performance, in particular, any prior performance under grants and contracts from the Federal government, including filing Current Research Information System (CRIS) reports and other documents related to the progress of grants;

- Adequate financial management system and audit procedures that provide efficient and effective accountability and control of all property, funds, and other assets; and

- Otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a grant under the applicable laws and regulations.

## Contact

For more applications and proposal submissions, contact the Proposal Services Unit. The following materials are available via Internet by sending a message with your name, mailing address (not email address), phone number, and a list of materials that you are requesting to psb@reeusda.gov. These materials will then be mailed to you:

- NRI Program Description, which describes all of the funding programs available through NRICGP.

- NRI Application Kit, which is a document that contains guidelines for proposal preparation and the requisite forms.

- NRI Abstracts of Funded Research, which is a searchable database of nontechnical abstracts written by the principal investigator or recent research projects.

- NRI Annual Report, starting with Fiscal Year 1995, describes the program concept, authorization, policy, inputs to establish research needs, program execution, and outcomes, including relevant statistics.

Proposal Services Unit/OEP/CSREES/USDA
Janice Donatone
NRICGP/USDA
Stop 2245
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-2245
(202) 401-5048
(202) 410-1901 - fax
jdonatone@reeusda.gov or psb@reeusda.gov

For general information, details regarding programmatic issues, and research ideas, contact the National Program Office.

National Program Office
Mark Bailey
NRICGP/USDA
Stop 2241
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250-2241
(202) 401-1898/(202) 401-4327 - fax
mbailey@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov/nri/

# Pest Management Alternatives Program

### *Competitive Grants Supporting the Development and Implementation of Pest Management Alternatives When Regulatory Action by EPA or Voluntary Cancellation by the Registrant Results in the Unavailability of Certain Agricultural Pesticides or Pesticide Uses*

The Pest Management Alternatives special research grant supports projects that help farmers respond to the environmental and regulatory issues confronting agriculture. These special grant funds support research that provides farmers with replacement technologies for pesticides that are under consideration for regulatory action by EPA and for which producers do not have effective alternatives. The passage of the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA) makes this special research grant of critical importance to the nation's farmers. New pest management tools are being developed to address critical pest problems identified by farmers and others in a crop production region and to identify new approaches to managing pests without some of the most widely used pesticides. Farmers have identified the lack of effective alternative pest management tactics as a primary reason for not implementing IPM on their farms. Where effective alternative tactics have been developed, they are widely and rapidly implemented by farmers. These special research grant funds are distributed on a competitive basis to all eligible research institutions through the Pest Management Alternatives Program (PMAP). Research priorities for PMAP are established with a database analysis system, which draws upon the expertise of the land-grant university system, commodity groups, and others.

## Project Examples

A full listing of projects funded by this program from 1996 through 2000 can be found at www.reeusda.gov/ipm/pmap.htm

- *Pest Management Solutions to Sustain High-Value Florida Vegetable Production*. The purpose of this project work is to monitor, evaluate, and project the impact of the Food Quality Protection Act on Florida vegetable IPM systems to assure that reliable and affordable IPM systems and services can continue. Funded at $152,907 for 2 years.

- *Development of a Blueberry IPM Program Utilizing Behavioral & Chemical Approaches*. This project in New Jersey involves developing a new suite of IPM tactics for blueberries based on behavioral, reduced-risk and novel chemical approaches that are not being reassessed under the Food Quality Protection Act. Funded at $98,093 for 3 years.

- *Biological Control of European Corn Borer with Inoculative Releases of Trichogramma ostriniae*. This project, in New York State, will evaluate early season inoculative releasees of parasitic wasps for the suppression of corn borer in fresh market sweet corn. It will also determine dispersal rates, evaluate the influence of nectar sources on the effectiveness of this parasite, and test compatibility with commonly used insecticides. Funded at $155,642 for 2 years.

## Application and Financial Information

To obtain copies of the full solicitation of proposals, the administrative provisions for the program, and the Application Kit (containing required forms, certifications, and instructions for preparing and submitting applications for funding) contact: Proposal Services Unit; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Stop 2245; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-2245; (202) 401-5048. When contacting the Proposal Services Unit, please indicate that you are requesting forms for the Pest Management Alternatives Program.

You may also request application materials via Internet by sending a message with your name, mailing address (not e-mail) and telephone number to psb@reeusda.gov that states you wish to receive a copy of the application materials for the FY 2000 Pest Management Alternatives Program. The materials will then be mailed to you as quickly as possible.

Grant amounts averaged $85,000 since 1996. About 13-25 grants are awarded annually.

## Eligibility

Under this authority, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may make grants, for periods not to exceed five years, to state agricultural experiment stations, all colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, federal agencies, private organizations or corporations and individuals.

Proposals from scientists affiliated with foreign organizations are not eligible for funding nor are scientists who are directly or indirectly engaged in the registration of pesticides for profit; however, their collaboration with funded projects is encouraged.

## Uses and Restrictions

CSREES seeks proposals that identify or develop replacement or mitigation technologies. The program funds the identification and demonstration of pest management alternatives or mitigation procedures for one or more pesticides (from a list identified by CSREES). The focus should be on modifying existing approaches or introducing new methods, especially ecologically based methods, that can be rapidly brought to bear on pest management challenges resulting from implementation of FQPA. Durability and practicality of the proposed pest management option(s) or mitigation procedure(s), and compatibility with integrated pest management systems is critical. Both technological and economic feasibility should be considered. Pest management alternatives or risk mitigation options identified should address various EPA risk concerns for pesticides being reviewed under FQPA (e.g., dietary or worker exposure, groundwater or ecological risk). Replacements for methyl bromide are not addressed by this request for proposals.

Proposals must show evidence of significant involvement of producers or other pesticide user groups in project design and implementation, including data acquisition and analysis, and the identification of potential solutions. Public-private partnerships and matching resources from non-federal sources, including producer or commodity groups, are encouraged. Proposals should describe how state and federal registrations of new pest management options will be obtained when they are required prior to use of new methods.

## Contact

See Application and Financial Information to obtain application materials.

National Program Office
Dennis Kopp
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture; Stop 2220
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-2220
(202) 401-6437
(202) 401-4888 - fax
Email: dkopp@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov/ipm/funding.htm

# Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP)

## *Grants to be Matched by States for Projects Aimed at Reducing the Risks and Uses of Pesticides in Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Settings*

Project grants for PESP are administered by the National Foundation for IPM Education, using funding from the U.S. EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs. The goal of PESP is to reduce the risks and use of pesticides in agricultural and non-agricultural settings in the U.S. The program's two major goals are: 1) to develop specific use/risk reduction strategies that include reliance on biological pesticides and other approaches to pest control that are thought to be safer than traditional chemical methods; and 2) by the year 2000, to have 75% of U.S. agricultural acreage adopt integrated pest management programs.

Organizations can participate in PESP either as partners or supporters. Partners are organizations that use pesticides or represent pesticide users. Partners agree to develop and implement formal strategies to reduce the use and risk of pesticides. In particular, they agree pesticide use will be tailored to specific sites, crops, and regions of the country. Partners commit themselves to define and implement their strategies in a timely fashion and to report regularly on progress.

Supporters are organizations that do not use pesticides, but do have significant influence over pest management practices. Food processors, for example, may influence the use of pesticides on produce they buy, even though they do not apply pesticides to the produce themselves. Supporters may include public interest groups whose constituencies have a strong interest in pesticide use/risk reduction. Unlike partners, supporters do not need to develop formal pest management strategies. Instead, they agree to promote programs that facilitate environmental stewardship. Participation in PESP offers the following benefits:

It offers the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship, enhance public perception of the organization, constituent support, and employee morale.

Upon joining, an organization is assigned a liaison who serves as the official contact with EPA. The liaison can help obtain information about the partnership and other EPA programs, policies, and procedures, and represent the organization to the EPA.

As funds allow, EPA and USDA provide partners with seed money to help support pest management practices that reduce pesticide use and risk.

## Project Examples

Among the grants awarded in fiscal year 1999 were those to:

Agricultural Conservation Innovation Center-*Accelerating IPM adoption through risk management*

Almond Board of California-*An outreach campaign to educate California almond growers about dormant spray impacts from almond orchards*

American Peanut Council-*Coupling IPM and precision agriculture technologies for economic and environmental gains in peanut pest management*

City of Davis, CA-*Expand the Healthy Gardens Program to target elementary age children and their families and develop tools to measure the program's effectiveness in changing behavior and improving the environment*

U.S. Hops Industry Plant Protection Committee-*Pesticide use in hops and the potential for reduced use*

Bio-Integral Resource Center-*Community outreach to increase public familiarity with IPM in order to reduce pesticide use*

Cranberry Institute-*Implementation of sustainable, low-risk, alternative pest management strategies for cranberries under FQPA*

• Iowa State University-*Standardized Measurement Tool for Adoption of Integrated Pest Management*

## Uses and Restrictions

Projects must address the risk/use reduction goals of the PESP, pesticide pollution prevention or Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Other projects may be considered if they complement these goals such as work with nutrient management. The type of projects that will be considered include education, demonstration, outreach and technology transfer. Projects may carry out education, demonstration, outreach, and technology transfer. Construction projects are not permitted under this award.

## Application and Financial Information

The federal share of project grants is limited to a range of $30,000-$40,000 of allowable project costs. Organizations receiving funds are required to match federal funds by at least 50 percent. For example, a grant request for $30,000 would support a project of no less than $60,000, with the state providing the balance. State contributions may come in the form of dollars, in-kind good and services, and/or third party contributions. Project duration should be 18 to 24 months.

The EPA Regional Offices are responsible for all mailings of the Request for Proposals within each region. Proposals should be submitted to regional offices for review and ranking. Proposals that the regions rank highest are evaluated by a panel composed of headquarters and regional representatives. Funding decisions will be made based on the ranking panel's recommendations.

Criteria for evaluation of applications include, but are not limited to: the partner's progress toward developing a stewardship strategy, the technical merits of the project, the need for the project and the potential of the project to contribute to meaningful and measurable pesticide risk and use reduction.

Proposals must be submitted on the format provided by the PESP. The deadline is generally in June. Notification is usually given in less than 30 days.

Application forms and instructions are available from the PESP web site.

## Eligibility

All organizations with a commitment to pesticide use/risk reduction are eligible to join the PESP, either as partners or as supporters. Eligible applicants include the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any U.S. territory or possession, any agency or instrumentality of a state, including state universities, and all federally recognized Native American tribes. For convenience, the term state in this notice refers to all eligible applicants. Local governments, private universities, private nonprofit entities, private businesses and individuals are not eligible. The organizations excluded from applying directly are encouraged to work with eligible applicants in developing proposals that include them as participants in the projects. Contact your EPA Regional Environmental Stewardship Program coordinator for assistance in identifying potential project partners. EPA strongly encourages this type of cooperative arrangement.

## Contact

PESP
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M St. SW (7511C)
Washington, DC 20460
(703) 308-8712 or (800) 972-7717
(703) 308-7026 - fax

## Internet

www.pesp.org/

# Regional Integrated Pest Management Program

## *Competitive Grants for Research and Extension Activities Related to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Administered through Regional Networks*

A competitive grants program for research and extension activities related to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) administered through four regional networks, the IPM Special Grants research program has been funded at around $2.7 million annually. The corresponding extension program has been funded at around $11 million per year, administered through land grants in each of the four regions.

Projects may span the spectrum from development of new IPM tactics, to combined research-extension implementation projects, to extension education and training. Because production systems and specific pest management problems vary significantly across the country, each of the four regions is given maximum flexibility in setting research and education priorities. Each region runs its own competition, establishing regional priorities for funding of projects. Some priorities are crop-specific, while others are based on various approaches to problem-solving through IPM. Collaborators are encouraged in both programs. However, CSREES can only award funds to land grant universities as per funding legislation.

## Project Examples

The following projects were funded by regional programs:

Process to Identify Barriers and Opportunities to Biologically-Based IPM: A large-scale mailed survey of growers was conducted to establish the extent of adoption of various IPM systems, to identify factors which hinder adoption of biologically-based IPM systems, and to prioritize future research, extension and training needs.

Ecological Pest and Soil Management Systems for Potatoes in Maine: Conventional, reduced chemical, and biological pest management systems for potato cultivation were compared within a 15-acre cropping system study to analyze the management, ecological, and economic implications of these alternative cropping systems.

Development of Sustainable Urban Agro-Ecosystems and Biocontrol Strategies for Gypsy Moth and Turf Pests: This research, carried out at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center in Maryland, focused on the development of pest management techniques and programs for the gypsy moth in non-forest areas such as homesites, communities, and suburban parks.

Cover Crops Role in Reduced-Tillage Sustainable Farming: The Agricultural Research Service of the Rodale Institute, in Pennsylvania, received funds to develop, document, and demonstrate innovative cover crop management systems for profitable no-till production of cotton, sorghum and corn in the southern U.S. by comparing systems which do not increase herbicide applications with predominant conventional practices. Field days and other demonstration activities will convey findings to farmers.

## Eligibility

Staff of land grant universities in the U.S. may apply for this competition. Other organizations and individuals may work only as collaborators or as sub-contractors. This is highly encouraged by CREES.

## Uses and Restrictions

In each of the four regions, research and extension staff appointed by their respective agricultural experiment station and cooperative extension directors work together to develop requests for proposals that ensure that available resources address priority pest management problems in the region.

## Application and Financial Information

Requests for proposals are available through the Internet and by more conventional means in each of the four regions. Your regional contact person (see Contact below) can suggest the best means to obtain information on: funding opportunities, priorities for research and extension projects, and application deadlines.

Proposals are evaluated through a peer review process and ranked according to the goals and objectives of the program, scientific merit and appropriateness of budget. Funding recommendations are then submitted to CSREES by each region s administrate advisers.

## Contact

Northeast Region
Dr. John Ayers
Pennsylvania State
Department of Plant Pathology
212 Buckhout Laboratory
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 865-7776; (814) 863-7213 - fax
e-mail: jea@psu.edu

North Central Region
Dr. Eldon E. Ortman
Agricultural Research Programs
Purdue University
1140 AGAD
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1158
(765) 494-8363; (765) 494-0808 - fax
e-mail: eldon_ortman@aes.purdue.edu

Southern Region
Dr. Fred Knapp
Agriculture Experiment Station
University of Kentucky
S107 Agriculture Science Building N
Lexington, KY 40506-0091
(859) 257-8989; (859) 323-3824 - fax
email: fknapp@ca.uky.edu

Western Region
Dr. Nick Toscano
University of California
Dept. of Entomology
Riverside, CA 92521
(909) 787-5826; (909) 787-3087 - fax
e-mail: ntoscano@uracl.ucr.edu

National Program Office
Dr. Michael Fitzner
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mail Stop 2220
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-2220
(202) 401-4939; (202) 401-4888 - fax
e-mail: mfitzner@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov/ipm/regrants.htm

# Science To Achieve Results (STAR)

## *Grant Competitions for Research that can Inform EPA Decision-Making*

STAR is a research program within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) focusing on the reduction of uncertainty associated with risk assessment and reduction of risks to human health and ecosystems. The grants are intended to facilitate cooperation between EPA and the scientific community to help forge solutions to environmental problems.

The STAR Program was intended to improve the quality of science used in EPA s decision-making process. STAR is designed to recruit and engage the participation of the nation's best scientists in the implementation of the Office of Research and Development s research program. The STAR Program includes the grant opportunities discussed below and fellowships and research center programs which are not discussed here.

## Project Examples

The following are examples of a few of the projects funded by the STAR program in different project categories:

Endocrine Disrupters: The Michigan PBB Cohort 20 Years Later: Endocrine Disruption? This project examines the cohort of 1900 women and their offspring who were exposed to polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) as a contaminant of cattle feed in 1973. The project will ascertain the cumulative incidence since exposure and will attempt to determine if there is evidence of endocrine disruption associated with PBB exposure. Project Amount: $360,005 over three years.

Water and Watersheds: Modeling Effects of Alternative Landscape Design and Management on Water Quality and Biodiversity in Midwest Agricultural Watersheds. The ecological and socioeconomic impacts of human land use and management decisions will be analyzed for six agricultural watersheds in Iowa, comparing the present landscape and three designed alternative visions of these same watersheds 25 years in the future. The project aims to inform land owners and policy-makers of the effects of land-use and management choices on water resources, ecosystem function, and human social systems in the Western Corn Belt Region. Project Amount: $1,228,521 over three years.

Exposure of Children to Pesticides: Exposure of Children to Pesticides in Yuma County, Arizona. Yuma County is responsible for growing much of the nation's fresh fruit and vegetable supply during the winter months. Seasonal and migrant laborers and their families are often exposed to a variety of pesticides. The project will evaluate 300 children recruited from the Valley Health Clinic, a primary care provider that serves primarily low- income Hispanic and Cocopah residents who are at great risk for routine exposure to pyrethroids and cholinesterase inhibitors. Project Amount: $596,039 over three years.

## Application and Financial Information

Grant applications are initially reviewed by EPA to determine their legal and administrative acceptability. Acceptable applications are then reviewed by a technical peer review group. This review is designed to evaluate each proposal according to its scientific merit. Each review group is composed of non-EPA scientists, engineers, social scientists, and/or economists who are experts in their respective disciplines and are proficient in the technical areas they are reviewing. A summary statement of the scientific review by the panel will be provided to each applicant. Funding decisions are the sole responsibility of EPA. Grants are selected on the basis of technical merit, relevancy to the research priorities outlined, program balance, and budget.

Funding levels vary ($75,000 to $500,000 per year), depending on the solicitation and research area.

## Eligibility

These grants are available to principal investigators in universities and other nonprofit research institutions. Academic and nonprofit institutions located in the U.S., and state or local governments are eligible under all existing authorizations. Profit-making firms and other federal agencies are not eligible to receive assistance from EPA under this program.

Potential applicants who are uncertain of their eligibility should contact Dr. Robert E. Menzer (see Contact below).

## Uses and Restrictions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Research and Development (ORD), entertained proposals for the following areas of special interest in FY 2000: 1) Drinking Water; 2) Aggregate and Cumulative Exposures to Pesticides; 3) Statistical Survey Design and Analysis Programs; 4) Exploratory Research and Futures; 5) Issues in Human Health Risk Assessment; and 6) Risk Assessment for Wildlife.

EPA collaborated with other federal agencies in FY 1999 by soliciting grant applications in the following research areas: 1) Water and Watersheds (joint with NSF); 2) Technology for a Sustainable Environment (joint with NSF); 3) Decision-making and Valuation for Environmental Policy (joint with NSF); 4) Environmental Statistics (joint with NSF); 5) Harmful Algal Blooms (joint with NOAA, NSF, and ONR); 6) Mechanistic-based Cancer Risk Assessment Methods (joint with NIOSH and NCI); and 7) Endocrine Disruptors (joint with NIEHS and DOI).

## Contact

Additional general information on the grants program, forms used for applications, etc., may be obtained by exploring NCER s web page (see below). EPA does not make mass-mailings of Requests for Applications. Information not available on the Internet may be obtained by contacting the national program office.

National Program Office
Dr. Robert Menzer
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
National Center for Environmental Research
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington DC 20460
(202) 564-6849
(202) 565-2444 - fax
Information: (800) 490-9194
e-mail: menzer.robert@epa.gov

## Internet

www.epa.gov/ncerqa

# Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program

***Grants to Improve the Environmental and Economic Sustainability of Farming and Ranching to Educational Institutions, Nonprofits and Producers***

The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program provides grants to advance farming systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities. Specifically, the program awards grants to farms, universities, nonprofit organizations, and research/education institutions or agencies to improve the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of farming and ranching. SARE also conducts educational and extension programs in an effort to increase knowledge about and help farmers and ranchers adopt practices that are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible.

SARE s regional offices administer three grant programs. Two of SARE s grant programs, Producer Grants and Research and Education Grants, may be used for on-farm research to explore diversification and marketing opportunities. SARE Professional Development Grants are used for a variety of professional development activities, ranging from conducting workshops to creating educational videos to hosting on-farm training sessions for extension workers and conservation professionals.

Getting research results and helpful information to farmers in a timely, useful fashion is a high priority of the SARE program. SAN, advised through a cooperative effort between land-grant universities, extension educators, nonprofit organizations, agribusinesses, farmers and ranchers to promote effective communication about sustainable agriculture through a variety of printed and electronic information tools.

## Project Examples

SARE has funded some 1,600 projects to explore and apply economically profitable, environmentally sound and socially supporting farming systems. The following examples focus on the development of diversification and value-added opportunities, in grants directly to farmers, universities and other organizations:

*Producing and Processing Sweet Sorghum in the Upper Midwest*: A Wisconsin farmer who raised crops and livestock on 170 acres decided to scale back to grow high-value crops on fewer acres. As part of his new approach, this producer grant recipient learned how to successfully grow sweet sorghum in Wisconsin's short growing season. The producer now sells sorghum syrup, as well as pumpkins, sweet corn, and broom corn for handmade brooms, at local farmers markets.Funding: $1,700.

*Investigating the Viability of Growing Herbs as Alternative Crops for Iowa Farmers:* This project examined how herb production practices could fit into current farm operations, determine which herb crops had the highest profit potential, and evaluated various retail and wholesale marketing alternatives. Funding: $50,260

*Organic Tomato Production and Marketing Manual:* This producer project built upon a previous New Jersey Agriculture Department and NOFA New Jersey initiative that successfully developed uniform packaging systems and established a market for organic tomatoes. Funding: $4,935

*New Harvesting and Marketing Methods for Chinese Chestnuts:* This producer grant recipient experimented with harvesting and marketing methods for Chinese chestnuts. Funding: $2,400

*Expanding the Market for Sustainably Produced Beef in Pennsylvania:* This producer grant recipient expanded direct sales of sustainably produced beef in the Harrisburg area and offered customers the opportunity to visit the farm. Funding: $1,304

## Information Available

SARE, through SAN, publishes handbooks, free bulletins and CD-ROMs. Information about SAN and SARE publications is available at www.sare.org or through any SARE office. Call (802) 656-0484 to order SAN publications, such as:

*Building Soils for Better Crops, 2nd edition.* $19.95 This book for farmers, extension educators and soil science students unlocks the secret of maintaining a diverse ecosystem below ground to foster healthy crops above. The 240-page handbook contains detailed information about soil structure and the management practices that affect soils -- as well as practical information like how to interpret soil test results.

*Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 2nd edition.* $19. A practical handbook that helps remove the guesswork for farmers considering cover crops. Explores how and why cover crops work and provides all the information needed to build covers into any farming operation.

*Steel in the Field: A farmer's guide to weed management tools.* $18. This farmer-oriented book speaks to experienced or novice crop producers in any part of the country. More than 45 drawings accent technical descriptions on the role, design and cost of tools. Twenty-one farmers (representing row crop, vegetable and dryland systems) from across the country on large to small farms explain their sustainable, profitable weed management systems integrating cultivation, flaming, crop rotation, careful tillage and soil management with reduced herbicides or none at all. Includes index; contact list; and a source list for many tools.

*The Real Dirt Farmers Tell About Organic and Low-Input Practices in the Northeast.* $13.95. 264 pages of firsthand advice from experienced practitioners on the many biological, cultural, mechanical and chemical options available to organic and low-input farmers.

*The Small Dairy Resource Book.* $8. Intended for family farmers who want to produce value-added dairy products, *The Small Dairy Resource Book* evaluates books, periodicals, videos and other materials on farmstead dairy processing in a thorough, annotated bibliography. Extension agents and other agricultural educators also will find this cohesive guide a valuable source of information about farmstead dairy production and processing.

*Source Book of Sustainable Agriculture.* $12. More than 500 entries abstracting publications, videos, and other information sources on sustainable farming. Several indexes and simple icons simplify searches. Expanded and updated in 1997, this is an excellent resource for educators, outreach personnel, and producers.

Free information bulletins for producers and agricultural professionals are available at www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs/ or call (301) 504-6422. Topics include:

- *Naturalize Your Farming System: A Whole-Farm Approach to Managing Pests.* This 20-page bulletin helps producers and the educators who work with them design farm-wide approaches to control pests.

- *Reap New Profits: Marketing Strategies for Farmers and Ranchers*
This 20-page bulletin offers snapshots of the many alternatives to marketing commodities through conventional channels.

- *Diversify Crops to Boost Profits & Stewardship.* This 12-page bulletin explores how alternative crops and agroforestry help increase profits and improve stewardship by expanding markets, reducing pest pressures and improving soil.

- *Put Your Ideas to the Test: How to Conduct Research on Your Farm or Ranch.* This 12-page bulletin for farmers, ranchers and the extension educators who work with them outlines how to conduct research at the farm level. The bulletin offers practical tips for both crop and livestock producers.

## Legislative Authority

Title 16 Subtitle B Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill)

## Application and Financial Information

SARE s four regional offices administer three grant programs: (1) SARE Research and Education grants, (2) SARE Producer Grants, and (3) SARE Professional Development grants. All grant programs have only one application period per year. However, each grant has its own application, deadline, and focus. Each region solicits proposals and awards grants.

*SARE Research and Education Grants:* Since 1988, competitive grants for sustainable agriculture research and education have been awarded by four regional administrative councils. Generally ranging from $30,000 to $200,000, they fund projects that usually involve scientists, producers and others in an interdisciplinary approach. Many funded projects involve on-farm research trials with crops and/or livestock; other projects have studied quality of life, agricultural marketing, integrated farming systems, and soil and water conservation. Successful proposals typically include economic analysis and outreach components. The program also funds education and demonstration projects, including the development of farmer-to-farmer networks. Producers can team up with one or more technical experts (such as a university researcher) to apply for this grant. Typically $1.2 to $1.4 million is available for each region.

*SARE Producer Grants:* Producers wanting to test an idea should consider this grant program for a research or education project. Many producer projects involve on-farm trials with crops or livestock, but some have focused on marketing or educational activities. Producers are expected to partner with an extension professional or other agricultural adviser and include a strategy for sharing their results with others. Usually, $150,000 to $200,000 is available for each region.

*SARE Professional Development Grants:* To spread the knowledge about sustainable concepts and practices gained from SARE projects, Congress began appropriating funds for professional development for Cooperative Extension Service (CES) staff and other agriculture professionals in 1994. To date, funds have been used for competitive grants and state-specific funding. SARE professional development grants are used for a variety of approaches, ranging from conducting workshops to creating educational videos to hosting on-farm training sessions for extension workers. Successful proposals have ranged from $10,000 to $100,000 and from single state to multi-state projects. Proposals that involve both extension personnel and producers are preferred, and partnerships of nonprofit organizations with extension and/or Natural Resource Conservation Service staff are welcome. Professional development activities are intended to be train-the-trainer programs, with a primary emphasis on CES staff, but they also provide opportunities for NRCS and other field agency staff. Typically, $300,000 to $400,000 is available for each region for grants.

## Eligibility

Universities, nonprofit organizations, government agency staff, and agricultural producers are eligible for SARE grants.

## Uses and Restrictions

The uses and restrictions vary from region to region and from year to year, depending on the specific call for proposals for a given year. Call the regional office for details on the call for proposals.

## Contact

Proposal guidelines for each of the grants programs are available from the regional SARE offices or the national program office. Each region solicits proposals and awards grants independently; contact the regional office for applications and deadlines.

North Central Region
13-A Activities Building, P.O. Box 830840
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, NE 68583-0840
(402) 472-0265
email: ncrsare@unl.edu

Northeast Region
University of Vermont
Hills Building
Burlington, VT 05405-0082
(802) 656-0471
email: nesare@zoo.uvm.edu

Southern Region
University of Georgia
Ag Experiment Station
1109 Experiment Street
Griffin, GA 30223-1797
(770) 412-4787
email: groland@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu

Western Region
Utah State University
Ag Science Bldg., Rm. 322
4865 Old Main Hill Road
Logan, UT 84322-4865
(801) 797-2257
email: wsare@mendel.usu.edu

National Program Office
Director, Sustainable Agriculture Programs
1400 Independence Ave. SW
USDA Mail Stop 2223
Washington, DC 20250-2223
(202) 720-6527; (202) 720-6071 - fax
email: ehauhn@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.sare.org

# Technology Transfer Program

## *Information on Commercial Technological Opportunities, Intellectual Property Protection, and Research and Development Partnerships with Private Sector Customers*

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the primary agency within USDA engaged in technology transfer. Through its Office of Technology Transfer (OTT), ARS has delegated authority to administer a patent and licensing program for USDA. This program carries out the policy and objectives of federal technology transfer legislation that enables and mandates the use of the patent system to promote the utilization of inventions arising from federally-supported research and development. The primary goal of the OTT program is to ensure that ARS inventions are brought to practical application so that their benefits are available to the public.

OTT provides a wide range of technological and industry partnership services to expedite the transfer of ARS technology to the private sector. These include Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs), Trust Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, and Confidentiality Agreements. A primary vehicle of these government industry partnerships is the CRADA. This program, authorized under the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986, allows industry to enter contracts with government labs. In exchange for this cooperation, the company involved is entitled to first rights to obtain an exclusive license of any inventions that may emerge as a result of the CRADA. The impetus of the CRADA program is the ARS scientist. Researchers and companies work together on the structure of a CRADA, which is then reviewed by OTT s Washington office for ethics questions and consistency with the agency s research mission. Seven regionally-based technology transfer coordinators facilitate the negotiation these industry-government partnerships.

OTT has been designated by the Department to coordinate the USDA National Patent Program. USDA/ARS has nine patent advisors who assist scientists at approximately 95 laboratories nationwide. Each advisor has a patent committee, which is comprised of ARS scientists. This committee reviews all invention disclosures submitted to the respective patent advisor to determine which will proceed with patent prosecution based on their commercial potential. The patent advisor develops and files patent applications with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO), and in some cases internationally. The patent advisor responds to actions from the PTO and coordinates responses of these actions with USDA inventors.

OTT also negotiates with the private sector the licensing of USDA patented technologies, pursuant to the policy and objectives set forth in the 1980 Amendments to the Patent and Trademark Laws (Bayh-Dole) Act and the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986. License fees and royalties are negotiated on a case by case basis and depend upon several factors including the scope of the rights granted, the size of the potential market, and the time and financial investment required by the licensee to bring a product to market. Information provided by the license applicant concerning the product concept, market size, profitability, and additional research and development required prior to product introduction is used to determine fair fees and royalties for each invention. Licenses can be granted both exclusively and non-exclusively or by specific field of use, thus enabling a small business to utilize ARS technology for commercial development. Negotiated royalty rates are based upon the anticipated profit margins for the products to be marketed by the licensee.

OTT plays a critical role in marketing USDA technology by identifying target industries and providing these industries with essential technical and business information on various technology opportunities. Marketing activities are conducted through the development and continued maintenance of an on-line Home Page to provide industrial customers with essential information on technology transfer programs and commercial opportunities. OTT also exhibits its services at various business and technology conferences, offering individual assistance on technology transfer programs and research areas. Marketing activities also include developing formal partnerships on technology transfer with individual state economic development and agriculture entities. This function allows OTT to coordinate commercial opportunities with state entities that match a respective state s industry profile and/or needs to enhance the transfer of ARS technology.

## Project Examples

Since 1987, OTT has developed more than 930 CRADAs with the private sector. Thirty-four percent of those CRADAs are with small business. ARS signed 98 CRADAs with the private sector during Fiscal Year 1999.

In addition, approximately 200 active licenses with industry have been granted on ARS patented technology, with approximately 40 percent of this portfolio licensed to small business. ARS granted 26 licenses to the private sector during Fiscal Year 1999.

**Examples of CRADAs:**

- A CRADA with **Soil Technology** of Fallbrook, California, is testing environmentally-friendly ways to protect strawberries from disease. ARS scientists are optimizing biologically integrated pest management systems to control disease. This is being achieved by understanding the role biological agents and biological mulches play in a biologically integrated pest management system developed by **Soil Technology**. As part of the agreement, ARS researchers are determining the efficacy of this system as a replacement for methyl bromide fumigation, which will be banned in the near future. In addition to strawberry production, researchers are looking at the potential of using this as a delivery system for other ARS-developed technologies.

- A CRADA with **Gustafson, Inc.** of Plano, Texas, ARS scientists are developing biologically-based products to enhance plant growth and protection against soilborne pathogens when added to vegetable transplant growing mixes. ARS researchers are working on biologically based alternatives to the chemical fumigant methyl bromide. They are investigating the use of vegetable transplants grown in mixes amended with organic material and Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria (PGPR) in an Integrated Pest Management (1PM) program which includes soil solarization. The combination of amended transplant mixes with soil solarization may further enhance colonization and survival of the applied PGPR and the beneficial effects of these microorganisms on host plants. Currently, the methyl bromide is used to control soilborne pests in high-value vegetable crops. However, methyl bromide has been implicated as an ozone-depleting compound, and production and sale of the fumigant in the United States will be banned in January 2001.

- A CRADA with **Wildlife Management Technologies**, of Noank, Connecticut, ARS scientists is developing and testing automatic devices for collaring white-tailed deer and other animals with acaricide/insecticide, identification, treatment, and tracking collars. This technology could significantly reduce environmental contamination by minimizing high volume area-wide applications of pesticides to control ticks. White-tailed deer are the main host animals of tick adults that transmit disease agents to humans causing Lyme disease, monocytic and granulocytic ehrlichiosis, and other diseases. The goal of the partnership is to place acaricidal/insecticidal collars on deer to kill a sufficient number of adult ticks, thus reducing free-living tick populations. The technology could also minimize the incidence of tick-borne diseases in humans. Ultimately the technology could be used to reduce tick numbers in residential areas, parks and recreational grounds, military installations, and other tick infested premises.

**Examples of Licenses:**

- A non-separable starch and oil combination was licensed to Seedbiotics Inc. of Caldwell, Idaho to manufacture seed coatings of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. Opta Food Ingredients of Bedford, Massachusetts also licensed the technology for a variety of food applications such as fat replacements. Union Camp Corporation of Wayne, New Jersey licensed the technology to manufacture environmentally-friendly adhesives, glues, and coatings.

- Separate technologies incorporating beneficial organisms to control the presence of pathogens such as *Salmonella* and *Camplylobaacter* in poultry were licensed to Milk Specialties Inc. of Dundee, Illinois and Continental Grain of Gainesville, Georgia. Each company is developing product lines that can be applied to poultry feed to reduce pathogen growth.

- Consep Inc. of Bend, Oregon licensed an ARS patent involving a trapping system for fruit flies. A product will soon be on the market that incorporates a feeding attractant to lure both male and female insects into a trap for effective monitoring and control.

- A process to make hypo-allergenic latex products from the domestic guayule plant was licensed to the Yulex Corporation of

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. To replace current latex products that contain allergenic proteins, the company intends to manufacture products for the health care industry such as surgical gloves and catheters.

**Examples of Commercial Products:**

- A degradable hydraulic fluid has been developed by ARS and **Lambent Technologies Corporation** of Norcross, Georgia that is made from oilseeds such as soybeans and sunflowers. This new product has the industrial quality and performance characteristics of current petroleum-based hydraulic fluids. In industry tests, the new degradable hydraulic fluid meets or exceeds industry specifications for off-road vehicles at a very competitive price. The product can be produced in tank-car quantities to meet military or private fleet needs.
- **Uni-Star Industries** of Marion, Arkansas, manufactures degradable products from corn starch and resin from technology developed by ARS scientists in Peoria, Illinois. Uni-Star Industries extracts starch and resin from corn and other commodities, which is then sold to a number of end users nationwide and in Canada for the manufacture of a variety of degradable products. Uni-Star manufactures resins for foam board production and biodegradable packing peanuts and has an annual payroll in excess of $200,000.
- **ASPIRE™** A biological control against post harvest diseases, this product is being manufactured and marketed by Ecogen Inc. of Langhorne, Pennsylvania. This granular product, which can be incorporated into a liquid spray, is registered by the Environmental Protection Agency for postharvest treatment of apples and pears. ASPIRE's main ingredient for control is the yeast *Candida oleophila*.
- **Super Slurper** A cornstarch-based absorbent dubbed *super slurper* has proved to be a valuable alternative to petroleum-based chemical absorbents, like carboxymethyl, which was discontinued in feminine hygiene products because it was found to contribute to toxic shock syndrome. At least four companies are manufacturing a variety of environmental products using the starch-absorbent technology. Products currently on the market that use *super slurper* range anywhere from baby diapers to absorbent mats used to sow grass along construction areas, helping to prevent erosion.

## Information Available

OTT is the Department's recognized resource for the private sector in obtaining information on technology transfer programs and commercial opportunities available from ARS laboratories. Information includes written and electronic technology summaries of licensable USDA technologies. To visit the OTT Home Page on the Internet type: http://ott.arsusda.gov.

## Legislative Authority

The Stevenson-Wydler Act of 1980
The Bayh-Dole Act of 1980
The Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986
The National Competitiveness Technology Transfer Act of 1989
The Technology Transfer Improvements Act of 1995

## Application and Financial Information

Industries seeking a license to a USDA patent can obtain a license application from the OTT. Generic CRADA boilerplates are also available to private sector customers interested in entering research partnership with an ARS laboratory.

## Eligibility

Information on commercial opportunities and technology transfer programs can be provided to anyone upon request. OTT offers preference to small businesses in obtaining licenses and CRADAs.

## Uses and Restrictions

OTT does not provide financial assistance to the private sector in the development of cooperative agreements. OTT can assist private sector partners in locating appropriate sources of capital either through other Departmental agencies or participating state government incentive programs.

## Contact

Private sector customers should contact regionally-based technology transfer coordinators for information on establishing a research collaboration, or the OTT licensing specialists.

**Technology Transfer Coordinators:**

North Atlantic Area
Dr. Claud Gerry Crawford
USDA-ARS-OTT Eastern Regional Research Center
Room 1036, 600 Mermaid Lane
Wyndmoor, PA 19038-8598
(215) 233-6610; (215) 233-6777 - fax
e-mail: cgcrawford@arserrc.gov

South Atlantic Area, Mid-South Area
Dr. George R. Bob Burns
USDA, ARS, Russell Agricultural Research Center
P.O. Box 5677, College Station Road
Athens, GA 30604-5677
(706) 546-3496; (706) 546-3401 - fax
e-mail: mvaughn@asrr.arsusda.gov

Midwest Area, Northern Plains Area, Southern Plains Area
Dr. Phillip A. O Berry
USDA, ARS, National Soil Tilth Laboratory
2150 Pammel Drive, Room 118
Ames, IA 50011
(515) 294-7762 / (515) 294-8125 - fax
e-mail: usdaott@iastate.edu

Pacific West Area
Martha Steinbock
USDA, ARS, Western Regional Research Center
800 Buchanan Street
Albany, CA 94710
(510) 559-5641; (510) 559-5963 - fax
e-mail: mbs@pw.usda.gov

Beltsville Area
Dr. Harry Danforth (acting)
USDA, ARS, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center
Bldg. 003, Room 208, BARC-West
Beltsville, MD 20705-2350
(301) 504-6421 / (301) 504-6001 - fax

Southern Regional Research Center
Joe Lipovsky
1815 North University Street
Peoria, IL 61604
(309) 681-6514; (309) 681-6688 - fax
e-mail: joe@mail.ncaur.usda.gov

National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research
Dr. Craig J. Carriere (Acting)
1815 North University Street
Peoria, IL 61604
(309) 681-6448; (309) 681-6682 - fax
e-mail: carriecj@mail.ncaur.usda.gov

Office of Technology Transfer
Technology Transfer Marketing Specialist
USDA-ARS-OTT
5601 Sunnyside Ave., Room 4-1178
Beltsville, MD 20705-5131
(301) 504-6965; (301) 504-5060 - fax

## Internet

www.ott.ars.usda.gov

# Wood in Transportation (WIT) Program

## *Financial and Technical Assistance for Demonstration and Commercialization of Wood-Based Technology for Transportation*

The Forest Service's Wood In Transportation (WIT) program provides financial and technical assistance for demonstration and commercialization of technologies utilizing wood in local transportation networks. Improvements in wood treatment, engineered wood composite products, and bridge designs make wood a cost-effective alternative material to use for replacing deteriorating bridges in many situations. These advances also open the door to a realm of opportunities to add value to underutilized timber species, create new rural timber based industries and improve rural transportation networks. The WIT program introduces people to these opportunities, gives them access to information on the latest technology, and assists them in pioneering efforts that will create new markets and better ways to manage forest resources. The program also awards grants for transportation-related structures that demonstrate new wood technology, or special projects that provide useful information on markets, new products or standard plans.

The National Wood In Transportation Information Center (NWITIC) (formerly known as the Timber Bridge Information Resource Center), located in Morgantown, W.Va., administers the WIT program. The Forest Products Laboratory (FPL), located in Madison, Wis., works closely with the NWITIC to link new research to identified needs, and to customize research results for specific applications. The National Forest System Washington Office and Regional Office Engineering staffs provide support as needed in the development of pilot projects. WIT coordinators are responsible for local program implementation.

For financial assistance, the USDA-Forest Service accepts proposals for vehicular timber bridge projects structures designed for normal highway use, pedestrian/trail bridge projects structures for recreational trail activities, commercialization projects, and special projects with a focus on structurally adequate and economical designs or other types of structures used in transportation applications, such as retaining walls. These projects should focus on advancing one or more of the following objectives: structural adequacy, longevity, serviceability, and economy.

Commercialization Projects were introduced as a component to the grants program in 1996 to foster the commercialization of modern wood in transportation technology. A key concept of these projects is to develop cooperative partnerships which join public and private entities and promote productive efforts to satisfy local transportation needs and stimulate local economic vitality.

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## Project Examples

A Double Diffusion Treatment Plant was cooperatively funded with the Tyonek Native Corporation in Alaska in 1995. This project assisted in developing an innovative preservative treatment facility for local timber species in Alaska. The treatment plant preserves local timber species using a double-diffusion process, which involves double-dipping green lumber in sodium fluoride and copper sulfate. The plant will provide long-term employment for area residents and allow Alaska to decrease its reliance on imported timber. The plant will also supply the lumber for two bridges that are being designed and fabricated on Tyonek land; a third is being developed nearby.

Meriwether County, Ga., Demonstration Bridge Project: Meriwether County is a rural county about 60 miles southwest of Atlanta, Ga. The Meriwether County Board of Commissioners used a grant from the USDA Forest Service to build a 40-foot, two-lane vehicular bridge. The bridge's strength and stability were proven when it withstood a 500-year flood in July 1994.

McCurdy Road Bridge Project, Richland County, Ohio This project develops designs and methods for the construction of small bridges on rural, lightly traveled county roads. The bridge was installed in 1995 with partial funding by the WIT program, the Richland County Engineer's Office and the Erie Basin Resource Conservation and Development Council. The 16-foot timber bridge, which meets the

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design standards, was built and installed by county personnel and equipment.

## Information Available

The USDA Forest Service prepared and published a design and construction manual, which can be acquired from the NWITIC. Other publications offered by the Center include *Crossings*, WIT s quarterly newsletter and fact sheets that contain information about completed projects.

Many publications developed by the Forest Products Laboratory, such as Standard Plans for Southern Pine Bridges, Plans for Crash-Tested Bridge Railings for Longitudinal Wood Decks, and a variety of monitoring reports are also available from the NWITIC.

## Legislative Authority

Section 1241 of the Forest Stewardship Act of 1990

## Application and Financial Information

An application package is developed each year to provide guidelines for applicants. These applications become available in September each year. All proposals must be returned to regional coordinators within the first week of December, and they are evaluated during January. Formal notification about projects selected for funding are issued in March. Applicants must match funding proposals dollar-for dollar. The maximum Forest Service cost-share amount is $50,000 for vehicular bridge projects, $10,000 for pedestrian/trail bridge projects, $150,000 for commercialization projects and $30,000 for special projects. The Forest Service contribution must be equal to or less than the cooperator s contribution to ensure up to a 50-percent match of federal funds. Matching funds cannot be other federal funds. Funding available for financial and technical assistance for fiscal year 2000 was $500,000.

## Eligibility

Local and state governments, and nonprofit organizations are eligible provided the structure is to be built on public lands.

## Uses and Restrictions

This funding opportunity is not intended to be a cure for all deficient bridges/structures, but rather to demonstrate the feasibility of modern timber structures as an economical solution. Proposals to rehabilitate or rebuild covered bridges will not be accepted.

## Contact

Northern Region (Northern ID, MT, ND)
(801) 625-5370

Rocky Mountain Region (CO, KS, NE, SD, WY)
(303) 275-5741

Southwestern Region (AZ, NM)
(505) 842-3229

Intermountain Region (Southern ID, NV, UT)
(801) 625-5370

Pacific Southwest Region (CA, HI)
(707) 562-8911

Pacific Northwest Region (OR, WA)
(503) 808-2348

Southern Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA)
(404) 347-7206

Northeastern Area, S&PF
(IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, WI) (651) 649-5246
(CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT) (603) 868-7689
(DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, WV) (304) 285-1530

Alaskan Region (907) 271-2550

National Program Office
Ed Cesa, Program Coordinator
USDA Forest Service
WIT National Information Center
180 Canfield Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
(304) 285-1593; (304) 285-1587 - fax
E-mail: ecesa@fs.fed.us

## Internet

www.fs.fed.us/na/wit/

# II. Financing Businesses and New Enterprises

**Also see:**
**Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants**

# Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program

## *Guarantees Loans by Commercial Lenders to Rural Businesses*

The Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan program guarantees loans by commercial local lenders to businesses in rural areas. By guaranteeing loans made by commercial lenders against a portion (up to a maximum of 90%) of loss resulting from borrower default, the B&I Guaranteed Loan program is meant to expand the available credit for businesses. B&I guarantees can result in a number of benefits to such businesses.

The loan guarantee may be used for business and industrial acquisitions, construction, conversion, expansion, repair, modernization, or development costs; purchase of equipment, machinery, or supplies; startup costs and working capital; processing and marketing facilities; pollution control and abatement; and refinancing for viable projects, under certain conditions. The 1996 Farm Bill created another eligible use for B&I Guaranteed loan funds: the purchase of startup cooperative stock for family-sized farms where commodities are produced to be processed by the cooperative. Ineligible loan purposes include: lines of credit, agricultural production which is not part of an integrated business involved in processing of agricultural products, or any project likely to transfer employment from one area to another.

## Project Examples

In Century, Fla., the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company was granted a B&I loan guarantee of $10 million to revive a defunct sawmill that is expected to bring 80 jobs to the area. The business intends to establish a niche by specializing and customizing lumber sold and services provided. The principal products and services include drying and dressing lumber products, exporting and importing production of quartersawed southern pine and cypress and other high-margin products, and treating and storage of hardwood and pine pulpwood logs.

In Wahpeton, N.D., PrimeBoard, Inc was granted a B&I loan guarantee of $8.8 million to finance the total startup costs associated with the production of particle board from wheat straw. This included purchasing real estate, building the factory, and purchasing machinery. PrimeBoard also obtained early stage financing from USDA s Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization (AARC) Corporation.

In Zeeland, Mich., Zeeland Farm Service was granted a B&I loan guarantee for debt refinancing and equipment purchase for a start-up soybean processing plant in the amount of $8 million. This provides a new value-added product and market for soybean growers within the state of Michigan.

In West Lebanon, Ind., a borrower was granted a B&I loan guarantee of $2.4 million to purchase a seed conditioning plant that will result in the creation of 24 new jobs in the county. The company purchases raw seed corn and soybeans, conditions, packages, stores and finally distributes the value-added product to wholesalers and retailers in the U.S. and Europe.

## Legislative Authority

Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

As is the case with SBA loan guarantees, the business must first find a bank or lending institution willing to extend a loan subject to a guarantee. The bank then makes a joint application with the borrower to the USDA state or district office of Rural Development. The state office generally has loan approval authority. Applications for loan guarantees over the states loan approval authority are submitted to the national office. Applications are available throughout the year and are accepted on an ongoing basis. Loan guarantees are to be approved within 60 days subject to the availability of funds. Pre-application reviews and advice are also available through state offices.
The maximum aggregate B&I guaranteed loan(s)

amount is $10 million to any one borrower, although the program administrator can grant up to $25 million. For loans of $2 million or less, the maximum percentage of guarantee is 90%; for loans over $2 million but not over $5 million, the maximum is 80%; and for loans in excess of $5 million, the maximum is 70%. Maximum repayment terms are seven years for working capital, 15 years (or useful life) for machinery and equipment, and 30 years for real estate. Collateral must be sufficient to protect the interests of the lender and the government and usually include personal and/or corporate guarantees. A minimum of 10% tangible balance sheet equity is required for existing businesses, and 20% for new businesses. Feasibility studies may be required. The interest rate is negotiated between the lender and borrower and may be fixed or variable. The lender addresses the business adequacy of equity, cash flow, collateral, history, management, and the current status of the industry in a written credit analysis. The funding level for fiscal year 2000 is $850 million. Lenders are expected to service, and if necessary, liquidate loans, with USDA s Rural Development s concurrence.

## Eligibility

B&I loans can be guaranteed in rural areas outside of cities with population of 50,000 or more. Priority is given to applications for loans in rural communities of 25,000 or less. Any legal entity, including individuals, public or private organizations and federally recognized Indian tribal groups, may borrow, except charitable, religious or fraternal institutions or organizations. Local economic development organizations and investors can also be considered. There is no size restriction on the business. Inability to obtain other credit is not a requirement. Authorized lenders include: federal or state chartered banks, credit unions, insurance companies, savings and loan associations, the Farm Credit Bank, and other Farm Credit System institutions with direct lending authority, and nontraditional lenders that must be approved on an individual lender basis.

## Uses and Restrictions

The loan guarantee may be used for business and industrial acquisitions, construction, conversion, expansion, repair, modernization, or development costs; purchase of equipment, machinery, or supplies; startup costs and working capital; processing and marketing facilities; pollution control and abatement; and refinancing for viable projects, under certain conditions. The 1996 Farm Bill created another eligible use for B&I Guaranteed loan funds: the purchase of startup cooperative stock for family-sized farms where commodities are produced to be processed by the cooperative. Ineligible loan purposes include: lines of credit, agricultural production which is not part of an integrated business involved in processing of agricultural products, or any project likely to transfer employment from one area to another.

## Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA s Rural Development Program (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the B&I program (along with other business and community programs) to potential borrowers and lenders. For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development office or any Rural Development field office. These offices can also provide contact information for local banks and lending institutions that have experience with the B&I program. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office
Dwight Carmon, Division Director
Processing Division
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0700
(202) 690-4100; (202) 690-3808 - fax

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/b&i_gar.htm

# Business and Industrial Direct Loan (B&I Direct) Program

## *Direct Loans to Rural Businesses*

The Business and Industrial Direct Loan (Direct B&I) Program is meant to expand the available credit for businesses that do not qualify for conventional bank financing in certain rural areas of the country suffering fundamental and economic stress. The program's primary purpose is to improve, develop or finance business, industry and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities, including pollution abatement and control.

Loans may not be used for agricultural production either directly or for integrated facilities, except for aquaculture, commercial nurseries, forestry, mushrooms, and hydroponics. Businesses engaged in the processing, marketing, or packaging of agricultural (including forest) products are eligible, provided any agricultural production aspect is separate from the rest of the business.

## Project Examples

- A gas station / convenience store in Tennessee received funds to replace tanks that no longer met EPA standards.
- A poultry processing plant in the Northeast received funds for equipment and working capital.
- A minority business in the Southeast received funds to purchase a roofing plant.

## Legislative Authority

Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

The USDA state or district office of Rural Development makes the loan directly to the applicant. The state office generally has loan approval authority. Applications for loans over $5 million are submitted to the national office. Applications are available throughout the year and are accepted on an ongoing basis. Loans are to be approved within 60 days subject to the availability of funds. Pre-application reviews and advice are available through state offices.

The maximum aggregate B&I Direct loan(s) amount is $10 million to any one borrower. Maximum repayment terms are seven years for working capital, 15 years (or useful life) for machinery and equipment, 30 years for real estate, and up to 40 years for community facilities. Collateral must be sufficient to protect the interest of the government and usually include personal and/or corporate guarantees. A minimum of 10 percent tangible balance sheet equity is required for existing businesses, and 20% for new businesses. Feasibility studies may be required. The interest rate is fixed. Funding available for loans for fiscal year 1997 is $32 million.

## Eligibility

B&I Direct loans can be made in rural areas with populations up to 50,000 that are suffering economic stress. Any legal entity, including individuals, public or private organizations and federally recognized Indian tribal groups, may borrow. Charitable, religious or fraternal institutions or organizations are excluded. Local economic development organizations and investors can also be considered. There is no size restriction on the business. Inability to obtain other credit is a requirement.

## Uses and Restrictions

The loan may be used for business and industrial acquisitions, construction, conversion, expansion, repair, modernization, or development costs; purchase of equipment, machinery, or supplies; startup costs and working capital; processing and marketing facilities; pollution control and abatement; and refinancing for viable projects, under certain conditions. Ineligible loan purposes include: lines of credit, tourist or recreation facilities, or any project likely to transfer employment from one area to another. In addition, loans may not be used for agricultural production either directly or for integrated facilities, except for aquaculture, commercial nurseries, forestry, mushrooms, and hydroponics. Businesses engaged in the processing, marketing or packaging of agricultural (including forest) products are eligible, provided any agricultural production aspect is separate from the rest of the business.

## Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA s Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the B&I program (along with other business and community programs) to potential borrowers. For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development Program office or any Rural Development field office. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office
Dwight Carmon, Division Director
Processing Division
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0700
(202) 690-4100; (202) 690-3808 - fax

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/b&i_dir.htm

# Direct Farm Ownership and Operating Loans

## *Government Loans to Family Farmers and Ranchers for Farm Ownership and Operating Purposes*

The purpose of the Farm Service Agency s (FSA) direct farm ownership (FO) and operating (OL) loan programs are to provide financing and assistance to family farmers to establish farms, achieve financial success and graduate to commercial credit or self-financing. FSA has various tools to assist family farmers, which include low interest rates, and individualized credit counseling and supervision. Emphasis is placed on assisting beginning, minority and other limited-resource family sized farms through regular and low-interest loans and individualized credit counseling and supervision.

## Project Examples

A beginning farmer in Illinois obtained a 4-percent FSA downpayment ioan for 30 percent of the purchase price of a home farm, put up 10 percent of the purchase price from family farms, and received a low-interest loan from the Illinois beginning farmers aggie bond program for the remaining 60 percent.

A farmer in Kentucky obtained an FSA operating loan to partially shift production out of a traditional, yet unprofitable cropping pattern and into an alternative enterprise for which there was a specialized local market.

An African American farmer in Mississippi used an FSA operating loan five-year line of credit to purchase inputs required to produce row crops and livestock, and a seven-year loan to purchase machinery.

An Idaho farmer received an FSA ownership loan to finance the establishment of buffer strips along a creek running through the farm.

## Legislative Authority

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

Applicant must apply for direct loan assistance at an FSA (formerly the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, and the Farm Loan Programs of the former Farmers Home Administration), county office or USDA Service Center located in the county where the applicant operates his/her farm. FSA officials will meet with the applicant to assess all aspects of the proposed or existing farming or ranching operation, and determine if the applicant meets the eligibility requirements. Local FSA County Committees will act in an advisory capacity to FSA loan officials on local agricultural practices, production conditions and loan applicants.

Once FSA receives all the financial and organizational information, the applicant will be notified whether the loan has been approved. The loan recipient must meet certain eligibility requirements, request funds for authorized purposes, have repayment ability, be able to provide enough collateral to secure the loan on at least a dollar-for-dollar basis and enroll in a borrower training program. The number of direct and guaranteed operating loans that FSA can make each year may vary depending on the demand for such loans and the amount of funds appropriated by Congress.

## Eligibility

Eligible borrowers must be U.S. citizens, be unable to obtain credit through commercial sources, have sufficient training or experience, have an acceptable credit history, be or becoming owners or operators of family sized farms and be able to demonstrate the need to maximize income from farming. In addition, applicants requesting direct FO assistance must have operated a farm or ranch for at least three years. An applicant who applies for FO assistance must be a beginning farmer or one who has either never received an FO or has received FO assistance not more than 10 years before the date of the proposed loan. An applicant who applies for OL assistance must be a beginning farmer or one who has never received OL assistance or received OL assistance not more than six years before the date of the proposed loan.

## Uses and Restrictions

FO loans may be used for acquiring or enlarging a farm or ranch, making capital improvement, paying closing costs and paying for soil and water conservation improvements, including sustainable agriculture practices and systems. OLs may be used for paying costs for reorganizing a farm or ranch, purchasing livestock or equipment, purchasing supplies, financing conservation costs, paying closing costs, complying with requirements under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, paying tuition for borrower training classes, refinancing indebtedness under certain conditions, and providing farm and family living expenses.

OLs are generally for one year, except for equipment loans, which are generally seven years. Standard FO loans may be made up to 40 years, except for special beginning farmer downpayment loans, which are 30-year loans that balloon after 10 years, leading to refinancing as commercial loans. Interest rates are at cost to the government rates for regular loans, one-half cost of money plus 1 percent for certain limited-resource borrowers, and 4 percent for downpayment loans. Loans may be made up to $200,000.

A portion of available loan funds are reserved for minority farmers and beginning farmers. Beginning farmer is defined in part as an applicant who has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years. For beginning farmer ownership loans, borrowers may not already own acreage exceeding 25 percent of the median acreage for farms in the county. In the beginning farmer downpayment loan program, borrowers put up 10 percent of the cost of the purchase, FSA finances 30 percent for 10 years at four percent interest, and the rest of the financial package is owner-financed or from commercial sources, including those made through special state beginning farmer programs available in many states.

Loans for conservation may be used for installation of conservation structures, establishment of forest cover or permanent pasture, conversion to sustainable agriculture production systems and other purposes consistent with conservation, integrated farm management, water quality or wildlife habitat plans.

## Contact

FSA is organized on a national, state and county basis. Applicants apply directly through local FSA county offices or USDA Service Centers. Individuals can locate the nearest FSA office by checking in the telephone white pages under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency.

National Program Office
James F. Radintz, Director
Farm Service Agency
Farm Loan Programs Loan Making Division
14th & Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 0522
Washington D.C. 20250-0522
(202) 690-1656; (202) 720-6797 - fax

## Internet

www.fsa.usda.gov

# Guaranteed Farm Ownership and Operating Loans

## *Federally Guaranteed Loans for Family Farmers for Farm Ownership and Operating Purposes, Including the Purchase of Stock in Cooperatives*

The purpose of Farm Service Agency s (FSA) guaranteed farm ownership (GFO) and guaranteed operating loan (GOL) programs are to help family farmers obtain commercial credit to establish or maintain a family farm or ranch. FSA guarantees the repayment of the commercial loan at 90 percent of its value or 95 percent in the case of loans to refinance an existing direct farm ownership or operating loan or for loans made in conjunction with a beginning farmer downpayment loan.

Farmers also may use FSA guaranteed loans to purchase stock in a member-owned cooperative. The cooperatives can be engaged in production, processing, packaging and/or marketing of agricultural and forest products.

In some instances, a special interest rate assistance program may be used in which FSA provides assistance to lower the interest rate. The interest assistance is designed in part to assist direct loan borrowers graduate to commercial credit.

## Project Examples

A beginning farmer working with a bank in Iowa obtained a 95-percent loan guarantee for an ownership loan and operating loan made in conjunction with an FSA downpayment loan, enabling the bank to make a loan it would not without the federal participation.

A rancher in California used an FSA guaranteed loan to purchase stock in a newly formed marketing cooperative that processes and sells specially raised beef to Japan.

A commercial lender in Ohio obtained an FSA guarantee on an operating loan to a farmer who will use integrated pest management (IPM) on a new agricultural enterprise. The guarantee was important to the lender, who was not familiar with IPM.

## Legislative Authority

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

Applicants apply for agricultural loans as they normally would with a local commercial lenders that make agricultural loans in their community. The lender will analyze the farm customer's business plan and financial condition. If the farm loan proposal looks realistic, financially feasible and there is sufficient collateral, but it cannot be approved because it does not meet the lending institution's loan underwriting standards, the lender may apply for an FSA loan guarantee.

In some cases, applicants may seek an FSA direct loan first, but a guaranteed loan must always be considered before a direct loan can be provided. Once applicants provide all the financial and organizational information to their lender, the lender submits a guaranteed loan application to the local FSA office and the request will be approved or disapproved within 30 days.

Farm customers must meet FSA eligibility requirements, request funds for authorized purposes, have repayment ability, and be able to provide enough collateral to secure the loan on at least a dollar for dollar basis. The number of guaranteed loans that FSA can provide each year varies depending on (1) the demand for loan guarantees, and (2) the amount of guarantee authority appropriated by Congress.

## Eligibility

To qualify for an FSA Guarantee, a loan applicant must:

- be a citizen of the United States (or legal resident alien), which includes Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and certain former Pacific Trust Territories;
- have the legal capacity to incur the obligations of the loan and provide sufficient security;
- have a satisfactory credit history and demonstrate repayment ability;
- have not had a previous Direct or Guaranteed Loan which resulted in a loss to FSA and not be delinquent on any Federal debt.
- be unable to obtain sufficient credit elsewhere at reasonable rates and terms to finance needs;
- For an Operating Loan, the producer must be the operator of a family farm after the loan is closed. For an Farm Ownership Loan, the producer needs to also own the farm.
- Corporations, cooperatives, joint operations, and partnerships must meet these same eligibility requirements, and the entity must also be authorized to operate a farm or ranch in the State where the land is located.
- In addition, the loan programs contain limitations on the length of time the loan applicant has operated a farm or borrowed from FSA.

## Uses and Restrictions

The maximum operating or ownership loan size that FSA will guarantee is $717,000.

For operating purposes, authorized loan purposes include:

- payment of costs associated with reorganizing a farm to improve its profitability,
- purchase of livestock, equipment, quotas and bases,
- cooperative stock for credit, production, processing and marketing purposes,
- payment of annual operating expenses,
- payment of costs for land and water development for conservation or use purposes,
- payment of loan closing costs,
- payment of other farm and home needs, and
- refinancing of debt subject to certain restrictions.

For farm ownership purposes, authorized purposes include:

- Acquiring or enlarging a farm,
- making capital improvements,
- promoting soil and water conservation and protection,
- payment of loan closing costs,
- debt refinancing.

## Contact

FSA is organized on a national, state and county basis. However, guaranteed applications are only accepted and processed in county offices. Individuals should contact an agricultural lender but may also contact the nearest FSA county office by checking in the telephone white pages under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency.

National Program Office
James F. Radintz, Director
Farm Service Agency
Farm Loan Programs Loan Making Division
14th & Independence Ave., SW, Stop 0522
Washington D.C. 20250-0522
(202) 720-1656; (202) 720-6797 - fax

## Internet

www.fsa.usda.gov/dafl/guar.htm

# Intermediary Relending Loan Program (IRP)

***Loans for Establishing Revolving Loan Funds to Provide Financing for Rural Businesses and Community Development***

The Intermediary Relending Loan Program (IRP) provides direct loans at 1 percent interest to intermediaries for establishing revolving loan funds for small businesses and community development projects in rural areas. Intermediaries are nonprofit organizations or public agencies that relend money through loan pools to ultimate recipients, who are businesses, individuals and others.

Final recipients of loans from IRP revolving loan funds involved in agricultural production are not eligible. However, businesses processing, packaging and marketing agricultural products will be considered.

## Project Examples

As part of the Pacific Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative, an IRP loan of $1.5 million supplemented an existing revolving loan fund for relending to small businesses in rural Jackson and Josephine Counties in Oregon. Businesses that create or retain permanent jobs involving skills related to manufacturing, industrial production, and wood products are given preference. The Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc., the intermediary, estimates that by targeting a maximum of $20,000 per full-time equivalent job created or saved, the IRP loan will create or save at least 50 jobs in the fund's first round of loans in these communities.

The North Kennebec Regional Planning Commission in Maine made a $150,000 working capital loan to KD Wood Products out of its revolving loan fund, created with a $2 million IRP loan. KD Wood Products buys lumber from local sawmills and processes it into about 200 different products, including unfinished furniture and lawn and garden items, such as fences, edging, and planters. KD used the loan to expand its operations and create new jobs.

In Salem, Ore., BC Hop Farms, Ltd. received a loan from the local revolving loan fund established with IRP funds. BC Hop Farms provides processing facilities for local farmers who grow hops and contract with breweries for sale of their processed hops. The loan was used for building construction and purchase of equipment to expand existing facilities, providing capacity to process a larger volume of hops.

American Cedar, Inc., of Arkedelphia, Ark., received loans of $225,000 from a local revolving loan fund, partially funded by IRP. American Cedar produces dimensioned lumber, finished lumber, finished panels, closet accessories, decorative moth repellents, and custom products for the domestic and international markets. Wood shavings from the manufacturing process are also sold to local horse stables.

## Legislative Authority

Section 1323 of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

Intermediaries with experience and expertise running revolving loan funds make applications to the USDA state offices of Rural Development. Applications are considered for allocation of funds in a quarterly national competition. Loans to intermediaries range from $100,000 to $2 million. Intermediaries receive a 30-year loan with a fixed annual interest rate of one percent. Funding available for fiscal year 1999 was $33 million.

Loans made by intermediaries from the revolving loan fund are limited to $250,000 per ultimate recipient. Intermediaries develop their own application procedures for ultimate recipients. Factors considered in judging applications from intermediaries include: financial condition, assurance of repayment ability, equity, collateral, experience and record of managing a loan program.

or providing other assistance to rural businesses, ability to leverage with funds from other sources, extent assistance would flow to low-income persons.

## Eligibility

Nonprofit corporations, public agencies, Native American tribes, and cooperatives are eligible to receive IRP funds as intermediaries. Intermediaries must have adequate legal authority and a proven record of successfully assisting rural businesses and industries. The ultimate recipients of loans from IRP revolving loan funds can be for-profit organizations, individuals, and public and private nonprofit organizations, and must be located in unincorporated areas or cities with populations under 25,000. Both intermediaries and ultimate recipients must be unable to obtain the loan at reasonable rates and terms through commercial credit or other federal, state, or local programs.

## Uses and Restrictions

Final recipients of loans from IRP revolving loan funds involved in agricultural production are not eligible. However, businesses processing, packaging and marketing agricultural products will be considered. Intermediaries may not use IRP funds to finance more than 75 percent of the cost of an ultimate recipient's project or for a loan of more than $250,000 to one ultimate recipient.

## Contact

For a list of intermediaries and their service areas, more detailed information, or an application, please contact your USDA state or district office of Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration).

National Program Office
Wayne Stansbery
Rural Business-Cooperative Service
Specialty Lenders Division
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3225
(202) 720-6819; (202) 720-2213 - fax
Email: wstansbe@rus.usda.gov

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov:80/rbs/busp/irp.htm

# Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)

***Grants for Assisting Small and Emerging Rural Businesses to Nonprofits and Public Bodies***

The purpose of the Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) program is to finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging private business enterprises located in rural areas through grants to public bodies, nonprofits, and federally recognized Indian Tribal groups. This includes starting and operating revolving loan funds, business incubators, and industrial parks. In addition, costs that may be paid from grant funds include the acquisition and development of land and the construction of buildings, plants, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, and utility and service extensions; refinancing; fees for professional services; technical assistance and training associated with technical assistance; startup operating costs and working capital, providing financial assistance to a third party; production of television programs to provide information to rural residents; and creating, expanding, and operating rural distance learning networks.

## Legislative Authority

Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972.

## Application and Financial Information

Applicants are required to submit supporting data before a formal application is made. After determining the order of funding priorities, RBS will tentatively determine eligibility and request applicants to submit formal applications. Application forms are available from and may be filed in any state USDA Rural Development office, but applications are usually processed in a district or area office. Grant amounts are based on need and available appropriate funds. The funding level in fiscal year 2000 was $34.6 million.

## Eligibility

The RBEG program is for non-profits and public bodies to assist small and emerging businesses in rural areas outside the boundary of a city of 50,000 or more and their immediately adjacent urbanized or urbanizing areas. Public bodies include incorporated towns and villages, boroughs, townships, counties, states, authorities, districts, and Native American Tribes on federal and state reservations, and other federally recognized Indian Tribal groups in rural areas.

## Uses and Restrictions

While RBEG funds cannot be used for agricultural production (through growing, cultivation, and harvesting directly or through horizontally integrated operation) they can be used for commercial nurseries, timber operations, and limited production related to technical assistance. Grants cannot be used for comprehensive, area-wide planning; loans by grantees with unreasonable terms, rates, and charges; development of a proposal that could pull business activity or jobs away from one area to another; development of a proposal that could result in an area with too many goods or materials and not enough demand.

All funded projects are subject to an environmental assessment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Applicants for grants to establish a revolving loan fund must include detail on their experience operating a revolving loan program, proposed projects, financial ability to operate a revolving fund, and plans for leveraging.

## Contact

To receive an application, contact one of the 47 USDA Rural Development State Offices where the project is located.

National Program Office
Carole Boyko
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS)
Room 6868 South Building, Stop 3225
Washington, D.C. 20250
(202) 720-1400; (202) 720-2213 - fax

## Internet

www.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan

# Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)

## *Grants to Nonprofits and Public Bodies for Community Planning, Technical Assistance and Training for Rural Businesses*

The Rural Business Opportunity Grants program (RBOG) was created by the 1996 Farm Bill to assist in the economic development of rural areas by providing grants to assist business and community development. Grant funds may be used to:

Identify and analyze business opportunities, including export markets, that will use local natural and human resources;

Identify, train, and provide technical assistance to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers;

Establish business support centers and otherwise assist in the creation of new rural businesses;

Conduct local community or multi-county economic development planning;

Establish centers for training, technology, and trade that will provide training to rural businesses in the utilization of interactive communications technologies to develop international trade opportunities and markets;

Conduct leadership development training of existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers; and

Pay reasonable fees and charges for professional services necessary to conduct the technical assistance, training or planning functions.

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## Legislative Authority

Section 741 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill).

## Application and Financial Information

Regulations and application materials are in the process of being developed for this new program. Applications will be solicited annually and scored according to defined selection criteria, to include: likelihood of project being sustainable, transferability of project to other rural areas, ability to improve economic conditions, leveraging and community need. Total grant funds available for fiscal year 2000 are estimated at approximately $3.5 million.

## Eligibility

Eligible recipients for this competitive grants program will be public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Native American tribes, and cooperatives.

## Uses and Restrictions

Grants may be made only when there is a reasonable prospect that the project will result in the economic development of a rural area and must be consistent with local and area wide strategic plans for community activities in the project area.

## Contact

When the regulations and application materials for this new program are completed, more detailed information and applications will be available through the state offices for USDA's Rural Development Program (formerly the Farmers Home Administration). Inquiries may also be directed to the national program office.

National Program Office
Wayne Stansbery
Rural Business-Cooperative Service
Specialty Lenders Division
1400 Independence Ave, SW, Stop 3225
Washington, D.C. 20250-1521
(202) 720-6819; (202) 720-2213 - fax
Email: wstansbe@rus.usda.gov

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbog.htm

# Introduction to the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953 as an agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small businesses, to preserve and promote free competitive enterprise, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the United States.

To meet these goals the SBA works with banks, intermediaries, and other lending institutions to provide loans and venture capital financing to small businesses unable to secure financing through normal lending channels. Most businesses meet SBA size standards, but check with your local SBA office for additional details.

The majority of SBA s financial assistance is in the form of loan guarantees. The SBA itself does not provide direct loans or grants to small businesses. The SBA also supports other organizations which provide loans, management training and services for small businesses (see Section III. Business Development Assistance: SCORE and SBDCs, pgs. 80-81.)

## Contact

SBA offices are located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. For the office nearest you, look under U.S. Government in your telephone directory, or contact:

1-800 U ASK SBA; (202) 205-7064 - fax
E-mail: answerdesk@sba.gov
TDD: 704-344-6640
Your rights to regulatory fairness: 1-888-REG-FAIR

## Internet

www.sba.gov

**Inquire at your local SBA office for the location of the following resources:**

BICs - Business Information Centers

TBICs - Tribal Business Information Centers

OSCSs - One Stop Capital Shops

SCORE - Service Corps of Retired Executives

SBDCs - Small Business Development Centers

USEACs - U.S. Export Assistance Centers

WBCs -Women s Business Centers

**Publications**

Call your local SBA office or the SBA Answer desk to obtain:

*The Facts About ... SBA Publications* -- a listing of free SBA publications

# Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR)

## *Grants for Feasibility Studies and Product Research and Development to Small Businesses*

Ten federal agencies grant SBIR funds. The USDA s Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program makes grants that are competitively awarded for feasibility studies and product research and development to qualified small businesses. SBIR funds support high quality research proposals containing advanced concepts related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture that could lead to significant public benefit if the research is successful. Objectives of the SBIR Program are to stimulate technological innovations in the private sector, strengthen the role of small businesses in meeting Federal research and development needs, increase private sector commercialization of innovations derived from USDA-supported research and development efforts, and foster and encourage participation by women-owned and socially and economically disadvantaged small business firms in technological innovations. Research topic categories of the SBIR program include: Forests and Related Resources; Plant Production and Protection; Animal Production and Protection; Air, Water and Soils; Food Science and Nutrition; Rural and Community Development; Aquaculture; Industrial Applications; and Marketing and Trade.

The SBIR grant program is divided into two phases, Phase I and Phase II. Phase I grants support technical feasibility studies. Phase II grants provide financial assistance for Phase I projects to enter the development stage to the point of commercialization. Businesses are encouraged to pursue Phase III commercialization through other sources as SBIR does not provide funding for expansion, marketing, and application of the developed technology.

The U.S. Small Business Administration s Office of Innovation, Research, and Technology (phone (202) 205-6450; Internet: www.sba.gov/sbir) oversees the SBIR program across the federal government. Other federal departments that may have relevant SBIR programs include the National Science Foundation ((703) 306-1390), the Department of Energy ((301) 903-3054), and the Environmental Protection Agency ((202) 564-6823).

## Project Examples

### Phase I

*Fresh Peeled Chestnuts:* In Carrollton, Ohio, the Empire Chestnut Company was awarded a $50,000 grant to study a simple impact peeling process that will produce a value-added chestnut product--fresh peeled chestnuts. The present market volume of chestnuts is rather small and dominated by imported, in-shell chestnuts which often reach the consumer in poor condition and are tedious to peel by hand. The objectives of the study were to improve chestnut preconditioning and the peeling device for maximum peeling with minimal kernel damage and to develop handling methods to obtain at least a two-week shelf life.

*Snowmobile Trail Grooming:* Somero Enterprises, Inc., a small company in Houghton, Mich., developed the idea of Fostering Rural Economic Development Using New Concepts in Snowmobile Trail Grooming. The feasibility study of the same title was awarded a $50,000 grant for an 18 month study. As recreation and tourism have become a major part of the economic stability in rural areas over the past decade, more and more businesses have looked into different kinds of trail grooming. Snowmobiling has become a major winter pastime with considerable income for local hotels, restaurants, markets and other establishments. A trail groomer that would enhance the physical properties of individual snow crystals would cause increased durability for the trail, decreasing set up time, and lengthening the snowmobiling season.

*Advanced Ceramics Using Rice Husks:* Under the Industrial Applications heading, the SBIR program awarded a grant of $50,000 to Nanomaterials Research Corporation in Tucson, Arizona. The proposal was for developing a process to produce advanced ceramics cost effectively using agricultural raw products, such as rice husk. Potential commercial applications of advanced ceramics include: structural, mechanical, electrical, optical, catalytic, magnetic, sensor, etc. The company, during Phase I will demonstrate the proof-of-concept.

Phase II

*Cane-Based Syrup for Small-Scale Limited Resource Farmers:* In Boligee, Alabama, Hall s Homemade Syrup was awarded an SBIR grant for $190,000 over a 24 month period to develop syrup production for small-scale limited resource farmers. A major problem for rural communities in the Alabama Black Belt is finding a high value crop and associated products that can be processed by the small, limited resource farmers in the region. This research proposed taking a cultural practice, cane-based syrup, and refining its production and developing value-added products from the ribbon cane.

*Grass Forage Cropping:* The G&G Hay and Black Ram Engineering companies of Princeton, Idaho developed a research project to look into forage-based agriculture on the sloping, highly erodible terrain in northern Idaho. Phase I research showed that central Idaho can produce grass forage products which are competitive in regional and export markets. Commercial grass forage cropping has the potential to serve as an economic engine in a manner similar to other grass forage areas in central Washington, the Columbia River Basin and west central Oregon. These areas have developed vibrant economies using commercial grass forage cropping as an alternative agricultural enterprise.

## Information Available

The program solicitation, proposal preparation instructions, evaluation criteria, considerations, information sources, research topic descriptions, technical abstracts, and information on upcoming national conferences are available on SBIR s website.

## Legislative Authority

Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

Phase I grants are for six months and will not exceed $70,000 beginning fiscal year 2000. Phase II grants are for 24 months, and do not exceed $250,000. The average grant award for a Phase II study is $225,000. Permission for extended studies may be granted.

Applications in the form of program solicitations are generally available and open in early June and close in early September. Pre-applications and proposals are not accepted, but advice may be sought from the national program office.

## Eligibility

To be eligible for either Phase I or Phase II grants, the principal investigator s employer must be a small business. A small business is defined under Section 2.2 of the Program Solicitation. Briefly, though, a small business must be independently owned, with at least 51 percent owned or for purposes of publicly owned businesses, 51 percent of its voting stock must be owned by United States citizens or lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens. The business, which can be a small farm, can employ not more than 500 employees (full time, part-time, temporary, or other). Recipients of SBIR Phase I grants are the only eligible contenders for an SBIR Phase II grant. Phase I grantees can apply for Phase II applications, but must have been awarded the grant within two years of applying for a Phase II grant.

## Uses and Restrictions

For both Phase I and Phase II, the grantee must be considered a small business at the time of grant award.

## Contact

Application materials, known as the Program Solicitation, and further information is available on SBIR s website or by contacting the national program office.

National Program Office
Charles Cleland, Director SBIR Program
Cooperative State Research, Education, and
Extension Service, USDA, Ag Box 2243
Washington, D.C. 20250-2243
(202) 401-4002 or Ruth Lange: (202) 401-1839;
(202) 401-6070 - fax
Email: ccleland@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov/sbir/

# 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program

## *Guaranteed Loans to Small Businesses Unable to Secure Financing on Reasonable Terms through Normal Lending Channels; Operates through Private-Sector Lenders that Provide Loans Guaranteed by the SBA*

Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act authorizes the Small Business Administration (SBA) to guarantee loans to small businesses that cannot obtain financing on reasonable terms through normal lending channels. The SBA basic guaranty program is designed to promote small business formation and growth by guaranteeing long-term loans to qualified firms. Loans are available for many business purposes, such as real estate, expansion, equipment, working capital or inventory. The SBA can guarantee 75 percent of the loan amount up to $750,000. For loans of $100,000 or less, the guaranty rate is 80 percent. The interest rate is not to exceed 2.75 over the prime lending rate. Maturities are up to 10 years for working capital and up to 25 years for fixed assets.

The 7(a) Program is the largest of the SBA's financial assistance programs, handling more than 80 percent of all SBA business lending activity. In addition to general financing, the 7(a) program encompasses a number of the SBA's specialized loan programs:

**Basic 7(a):** Guarantees long-term loans to small businesses that cannot obtain financing on reasonable terms through normal lending channels for uses such as real estate, expansion, equipment, working capital or inventory.

**LowDoc:** Designed to reduce the paperwork involved in loan requests of $150,000 or less. The SBA uses a one-page application and relies on the strength of the individual applicant's character and credit history. The applicant must first satisfy all of the lender's requirements; then the lender may request a LowDoc guaranty.

**SBAExpress:** SBAExpress encourages participating banks to use their own documentation and procedures to approve, service and liquidate loans of up to $150,000. In return, the SBA agrees to guarantee up to 50 percent of each loan. This is a pilot program with selected banks nationwide.

**CAPLines:** Finances small business short-term, cyclical working-capital needs. There are five distinct short-term working capital loans: the Seasonal, Contract, Builder's, Standard Asset-Based, and Small Asset-Based lines. Most SBA regulations governing the 7(a) Program also govern this program. SBA generally can guarantee up to $750,000.

**International:** Offers long-term financing to small businesses working or preparing to work in international trade, as well as those businesses adversely affected by import competition.

**Export:** Provides short-term working capital to exporters in a combined working effort of the SBA and the Export-Import Bank.

**Prequalification Loans:** A pilot loan program enabling the SBA to prequalify a guaranty for loans of $250,000 or less before the business owner goes to a bank. This program is designed for women, veterans, minorities, rural businesses, and selected industries and geographical areas.

**7(m) Microloan:** Available in selected locations around the country, the MicroLoan program provides short-term loans of up to $25,000. If you need a loan for small-scale financing purposes such as inventory, supplies and working capital (but not to pay existing debts), this program may be your answer. MicroLoans are made through SBA-approved nonprofit groups, known as intermediaries, which also provide counseling and technical assistance. Call your local SBA office to locate the nearest SBA-designated group.

Repayment ability from the cash flow of the business is a primary consideration in the SBA loan decision process. Good character, management capability, collateral, and owner's equity contribution are also important considerations. All owners of 20 percent or more are required to personally guarantee SBA loans.

## Project Examples

A policy of client confidentiality prevents SBA staff from providing examples of loan projects. You can obtain a free copy of The Resource Directory for Small Business Management, a listing of publications and videotapes available for purchase, from your local SBA office or the SBA Answer Desk (see Contact section below).

## Eligibility

The vast majority of businesses are eligible for financial assistance from the SBA. Applicant businesses must operate for profit; be engaged in, or propose to do business in the United States or its possessions; have reasonable owner equity to invest; and must have used alternative financial resources including personal assets.

Ineligible businesses are those which are engaged in illegal activities, loan packaging, speculation, multi-sales distribution, gambling, investment or lending, or where the owner is on parole. Also ineligible are the following types of businesses: real estate investment; speculative activities; academic schools; pyramid sales plans; illegal activities; charitable or religious activities, or nonprofit institutions.

The Small Business Act defines an eligible small business as one that is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field of operation. This can vary from industry to industry. Size standards which define the maximum size of an eligible small business are as follows:

| Industry | Size |
|---|---|
| Retail | $5.0 - $21 million receipts |
| Construction | $7 - $17 million receipts |
| Agriculture | $0.5 - $3.5 million receipts |
| Wholesale | No > than 100 employees |
| Manufacturing | 500 to 1,500 employees |
| Service | No > than $21.5 million receipts |

Size eligibility should be discussed with the local SBA office staff. Also note that the standards for a particular business may change from time to time and some exceptions do apply.

The proceeds of SBA loans can be used for most business purposes, including the purchase of real estate to house business operations; construction, renovation or leasehold improvements; acquisition of furniture, fixtures, machinery, and equipment; purchase of inventory; and working capital.

Loan proceeds may not be used to: finance floor plan needs; purchase real estate where the participant has issued a forward commitment to the builder/developer, or where the real estate will be held primarily for investment purposes; make payments to owners or pay delinquent withholding taxes; or pay existing debt unless it can be shown that the refinancing will benefit the small business and that the need to refinance is not indicative of imprudent management. (Proceeds can never be used to reduce the exposure of the participant in the loans being refinanced.)

## Uses and Restrictions

SBA loans can be used for most business purposes including establishing a new business, purchasing inventory, furniture and fixtures, machinery, equipment, buying land for construction, building, financing leasehold improvements, real property, and for use as working capital. In some cases, proceeds may be used for financing certain types of debt. Some restrictions and special circumstances exist.

## Contact

Check the telephone directory under U.S. Government for the nearest SBA office or call the Small Business Answer Desk 1-(800) 8-ASK-SBA or (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

SBA OnLine- electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required
(800) 697-4636 (limited access)
(900) 463-4636 (full access)
(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro only)

## Internet

www.sba.gov/

7(a) Program:
www.sbaonline.sba.gov/business_finances/7aloan.html

# 504 Certified Development Company (504 CDC) Program (SBA)

***Stimulates Creation of Jobs by Providing Fixed Asset Financing to Small Firms for the Construction or Rehabilitation of Owner-Occupied or Leased Premises***

The 504 Certified Development Company (504 CDC) Program of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) makes loans available to growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets through SBA Certified Development Companies (CDCs). Loans can be used to acquire land, buildings, machinery and equipment; and for building, modernizing, renovating or restoring existing facilities and sites. CDCs are private, nonprofit corporations whose purpose is to contribute to the economic development of their communities by assisting small businesses. There are about 270 CDCs nationwide.

Although the total size of projects using CDC financing is unlimited, the maximum amount of CDC participation in any individual project is usually $750,000. Typical projects range in size from $500,000 to $2 million with the average project totaling $1 million. The average CDC participation in any project $870,000.

## Project Examples

A typical project includes approximately 50 percent financed by a bank.

## Application and Financial Information

Initial contact should be made through a local CDC (see Contact below).

Interest rates are based on the current market rate for five- and 10-year U.S. Treasury issues, plus an increment above the Treasury rate, based on market conditions. Maturities of 10 and 20 years are available. Repayment is made in monthly, level-debt installments.

Collateral typically includes a mortgage on the land and the building being financed, liens on machinery, equipment and fixtures, and lease assignments. Private sector lenders are secured by a first lien on the project. The SBA is secured by a second lien. The SBA also requires personal guaranties from all persons who own 20 percent or more of the small business borrower.

SBA regulations specify limits on fees that must be paid in connection with SBA financing.

## Eligibility

To be eligible, a business must be a for-profit corporation, partnership or proprietorship. Under the 504 Program, the business qualifies if its net worth does not exceed $6 million, and its average net profit after taxes does exceed $2 million in the previous two years. Loans cannot be made to businesses engaged in speculation, investment in rental real estate, gambling, lending or nonprofit concerns.

## Uses and Restrictions

Loan proceeds may be used for fixed asset projects such as: purchasing existing buildings; purchasing land in connection with the construction of a building; and land improvements such as grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping; construction; modernizing, renovating or converting existing facilities; purchasing machinery and equipment; paying interest on interim financing; and paying professional fees directly attributable to the project, such as surveying, engineering, architect, appraisal, legal and accounting fees.

The 504 Program cannot be used for working capital or inventory, consolidating or repaying debt, refinancing, or financing a plant not located in the U.S., its territories and possessions.

## Contact

Local Certified Development Companies can be identified by contacting your local Chamber of Commerce or economic development authority in your city, county, or state government. You may also call any SBA District office for assistance in locating a Certified Development Company.

Check the telephone directory under "U.S. Government" for the nearest SBA office or:

Telephone inquiries- Small Business Answer Desk 1-(800) 8-ASK-SBA or (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

SBA OnLine- electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required

(800) 697-4636 (limited access)
(900) 463-4636 (full access)
(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro only)

## Internet

CDC Program:
www.sba.gov/financing/frcdc504.html

SBA Home Page:
www.sba.gov/

# MicroLoan Program

## *Short-Term Loans for Financing Inventory, Purchasing Equipment, Machinery, and Fixtures, Seeking Leasehold Improvements, Providing Working Capital or Receiving Technical Assistance*

The MicroLoan Program was developed to increase the availability of very small loans to prospective small business borrowers. Under this program, the SBA makes funds available to nonprofit intermediaries, who in turn make loans to eligible borrowers.

### Project Examples

Client confidentiality does not permit the SBA or nonprofit lenders to release information to the public on specific projects.

### Application and Financial Information

Loans are made by selected nonprofit lenders in amounts up to a maximum of $25,000. The average loan size is $10,500. Each nonprofit lending organization has its own loan requirements. Generally, lenders will take collateral against a loan. In most cases, the personal guaranties of the business owners are also required.

Depending on the earnings of the business, the loan maturity may be as long as six years. Rates for microloans are determined by the intermediary s cost of funds and the size of the microloan.

### Eligibility

Virtually all types of for-profit businesses that meet SBA basic requirements are eligible. Lending decisions under this program are made solely by the intermediary lender. They are based on credit experience, character, and/or relationships built during the preloan technical assistance and training.

### Uses and Restrictions

Loans may be used for furniture, fixtures, supplies, inventory, machinery, equipment and working capital. Loans may not be used as a downpayment or for the purchase of real estate.

The MicroLoan Program is a relatively new program. It is available in most areas of the country.

### Contact

Check the telephone directory under U.S. Government for the nearest SBA office to ask for information regarding your local intermediary lender or call the SBA Answer Desk 1-(800) 8-ASK-SBA or (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

SBA OnLine- electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required

(800) 697-4636 (limited access)

(900) 463-4636 (full access)

(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro only)

### Internet

SBA Home Page:
www.sba.gov/

SBA gopher:
gopher.sbaonline.sba.gov/

File transfer protocol:
ftp.sbaonline.sba.gov/

# Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs)

## *Equity Capital, Long-Term Loans and Expert Management Assistance*

Congress created the Small Business Investment Company Program in 1958 to fill the gap between the availability of venture capital and the needs of small business in start-up and growth situations. SBICs, licensed and regulated by the Small Business Administration (SBA), are privately owned and managed investment firms. They use their own funds, plus funds obtained by borrowing at favorable rates with an SBA guaranty and/or by selling their preferred stock to the SBA, to make venture-capital investments in small businesses.

Virtually all SBICs are profit-motivated businesses. They provide equity capital, long-term loans, debt-equity investments and management assistance to qualifying small businesses. Their incentive is the chance to share in the success of the small business as it grows and prospers. Most SBICs are owned by small groups of local investors. Many, however, are owned by commercial banks. Some SBICs are corporations with publicly traded stock; others are subsidiaries of corporations.

The program makes funding available to all types of manufacturing, distribution and service industries. According to SBA data, the industry group Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries received less than 2 percent of SBIC funds from 1994-1996.

Many investment companies seek out small businesses with new products or services because of the strong growth potential of such firms. Some SBICs specialize in a particular field in which their management has special knowledge or competency. Most, however, consider a wide variety of investment opportunities.

## Project Examples

Client confidentiality in SBIC affairs prohibits the description of specific examples.

## Eligibility

A business must meet the SBA s definition of small to be eligible for SBIC financing. In general, the SBA defines small businesses as companies whose net worth is $18 million or less and whose average net (after-tax) income for the preceding two years does not exceed $6 million. For some industries, the above standards are too low, and alternative size standards are used. In determining whether a business qualifies, the SBA considers its parent, subsidiaries and affiliates.

## Uses and Restrictions

The SBA publishes a regularly updated directory all current SBIC licenses as well as the amount of each SBIC s private capital and the amount of government leverage it has received. Information on each SBIC s type of ownership and investment policies are also available from the SBA by mail or over the Internet and through SBA OnLine, the electronic bulletin board.

## Contact

The nearest SBA office can be identified in the telephone directory under U.S. Government or call the SBA Anser Desk at (800) 8-ASK-SBA. To send a fax to the SBA, dial (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired, the TDD is (704) 344-6640.

SBA OnLine: electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required

(800) 697-4636 (limited access)
(900) 463-4636 (full access)
(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro area)

## Internet

www.sba.gov/inv

# Downpayment Farm Ownership Loan Program

*Loans for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers & Purchase Options on Inventory Farmland*

The Farm Service Agency FSA has a special downpayment FO loan program to assist beginning farmers and ranchers to purchase a farm or ranch. This program also provides a means for retiring farmers to transfer their land to a future generation of farmers and ranchers.

FSA provides direct and guaranteed loans to beginning farmers and ranchers who are unable to obtain financing from commercial credit sources. Each fiscal year, the Agency targets a portion of its direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loan (OL) funds to beginning farmers and ranchers.

FSA advertises acquired farm property within 15 days of acquisition. Eligible beginning farmers and ranchers are given first priority to purchase these properties at the appraised market value for the first 75 days after acquisition. If more than one eligible beginning farmer or rancher offers to purchase the property, the buyer is chosen randomly.

In fiscal year 1999 the obligations incurred for Downpayment Farm Ownership loans exceeded $11.7 million.

## Application and Financial Information

Applications for direct loan assistance may be made at the FSA county office serving the county where the operation is located. Local FSA offices are listed in the telephone directory under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency. For guaranteed loans, applicants must apply to a commercial lender who participates in the Guaranteed Loan Program. Local FSA offices have lists of participating lenders.

Maximum amounts of indebtedness are:

- Direct FO or OL: $200,000
- Guaranteed FO or OL: $700,000

Beginning farmer or rancher applicants may choose to participate in a joint financing plan that is also available to other applicants. In this program, FSA lends up to 50 percent of the amount financed, and another lender provides 50 percent or more. FSA will charge a reduced interest rate on the loan.

## Eligibility

A beginning farmer or rancher is an individual or entity who (1) has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years; (2) meets the loan eligibility requirements of the program to which he/she is applying; (3) substantially participates in the operation; and, (4) for FO loan purposes, does not own a farm greater than 25 percent of the average size farm in the county.

To qualify:

- An applicant must make a cash downpayment of at least 10 percent of the purchase price.
- FSA may provide a maximum amount equal to 30 percent of the purchase price or appraised value, whichever is less. The term of the loan is 10 years at a fixed interest rate of 4 percent.
- The remaining balance may be obtained from a commercial lender or private party. FSA can provide up to a 95 percent guarantee if financing is obtained from a commercial lender. Participating lenders do not have to pay a guarantee fee.
- The purchase price or appraised value, whichever is lower, may not exceed $250,000.

## Uses and Restrictions

Note: all applicants for direct FO loans must have operated a farm for at least 3 years. If the applicant is a business entity, all members must be related by blood or marriage, and all stockholders in a corporation must be eligible beginning farmers.

## Contact

FSA is organized on a national, state and county basis. Applicants apply directly through the county or area office. Individuals can locate the nearest FSA office by checking in the telephone white pages under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency.

National Program Office
James F. Radintz, Director
Farm Service Agency
Farm Loan Programs Loan Making Division
14th & Independence Ave., SW, Stop 0522
Washington, D.C. 20250-0522
(202) 720-6797; (202) 690-1117 - fax

## Internet

www.fsa.usda.gov

# Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Persons

## *Farm Purchase and Operating Loans Targeting Socially Disadvantaged Groups*

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family-size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year.

A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders.

The purposes of the program are to:

- Target direct and guaranteed loan assistance to socially disadvantaged persons;
- Discover and remove obstacles that prevent the full participation of those persons in FSA's farm loan programs;
- Provide advice to qualified applicants to help them develop sound farm management practices, analyze problems, and plan the best use of available resources essential for success in farming or ranching.

In fiscal year 1999 the obligations incurred for Socially Disadvantaged loans exceeded $94.5 million and $68.9 million for direct and guaranteed operating loans respectively. It exceeded $34.9 million and $97.6 million for direct farm ownership and guaranteed farm ownership loans respectively.

## Application and Financial Information

Direct loans are made to applicants by FSA and include both farm operating and farm ownership loans.

Guaranteed loans also may be made for ownership or operating purposes, and may be made by any lending institution subject to Federal or State supervision (banks, savings and loans, insurance companies and units of the Farm Credit System including the Bank for Cooperatives) and guaranteed by FSA. Some State governments also operate farm loan programs that are eligible for FSA guarantees. Typically, FSA guarantees 90 or 95 percent of a loan against any loss that might be incurred if the loan fails.

Repayment terms for direct operating loans depend on the collateral securing the loan and usually run from 1 to 7 years. Repayment terms for direct ownership loans can be as long as 40 years. Guaranteed loan terms are set by the lender.

Interest rates for direct loans are set periodically according to the Government's cost of borrowing. Interest rates for guaranteed loans are established by the lender.

Applications for all FSA direct loan programs are made through FSA's county offices. Offices often are located in county seats, and their addresses and telephone numbers can be found in local telephone directories under United States Government, Department of Agriculture.

Guaranteed loan applications are made with the lender. In cases where a lender is not known to an applicant, personnel at the county offices will help find one and will help with an application, either for a direct loan or a guaranteed loan.

### Eligibility

Individuals, partnerships, joint operations, corporations, and cooperatives primarily and directly engaged in farming and ranching on family-size operations may apply. A family-size farm is considered to be one that a family can operate and manage itself.

In addition to being members of a socially disadvantaged group, individual applicants under this program must meet all requirements for FSA's regular farm loan program assistance. To be eligible, an applicant must, among other requirements:

- Have a satisfactory history of meeting credit obligations;
- Have sufficient education, training, or at least 1 year s experience in managing or operating a farm or ranch within the last 5 years for a direct operating loan (OL) or, for a direct farm ownership loan, have 3 years experience in operating a farm or ranch;
- Be a citizen of the United States (or a legal resident alien), including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and certain former Pacific Island Trust Territories;
- Be unable to obtain credit elsewhere at reasonable rates and terms to meet actual needs;
- Possess the legal capacity to incur the obligations of the loan.

In the case of corporations, cooperatives, joint operations, or partnerships, the stockholders, members, or partners holding a majority interest must meet these same eligibility requirements. The borrowing entity must be authorized to operate a farm or ranch in the State where the actual operation is located.

In addition, the entity must be owned by U.S. citizens or legal resident aliens, and the socially disadvantaged members must hold a majority interest in the entity.

If the individuals holding a majority interest in the entity are related by blood or marriage, at least one stockholder, member, or partner must operate the family farm or ranch. If they are not related by blood or marriage, those holding a majority interest must operate the farm or ranch.

## Uses and Restrictions

Farm ownership loan funds may be used to purchase or enlarge a farm or ranch, purchase easements or rights of way needed in the farm s operation, erect or improve buildings such as a dwelling or barn, promote soil and water conservation and development, and pay closing costs.

Farm operating loan funds may be used to purchase livestock, poultry, farm equipment, fertilizer, and other materials necessary to operate a successful farm. OL funds can also be used for family living expenses, refinancing debts under certain conditions, paying salaries of hired farm laborers, installing or improving water systems for home use, livestock, or irrigation and other improvements.

## Contact

FSA is organized on a national, state and county basis. Applicants apply directly through the county or area office. Individuals can locate the nearest FSA office by checking in the telephone white pages under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency.

National Program Office
James F. Radintz, Director
Farm Service Agency
Farm Loan Programs Loan Making Division
14th & Independence Ave., SW, Stop 0522
Washington, D.C. 20250-0522
(202) 720-1656; (202) 720-6797 - fax

## Internet

www.fsa.usda.gov

# III. Management Assistance

Also see:

**Rural Business Enterprise Grants**
**Intermediary Relending Loan Program**
**Rural Business Opportunity Grants**

# Cooperative Services (CS)

## *Assistance for Forming and Operating Agricultural Cooperatives in the Form of Research, Technical Assistance, Information, Training, Educational Materials and Limited Funding for Cooperative Research Agreements*

Cooperative Services (CS) helps rural residents form new cooperative businesses and improve the operations of existing cooperatives. To accomplish this, CS provides technical assistance, conducts training workshops, and produces and distributes information and educational materials. Currently, CS works almost exclusively with agricultural (including forest product) cooperatives. A legislative initiative is underway, however, to expand its authority to provide services to all rural cooperatives. Recent projects already include other types of rural cooperatives.

CS provides a wide range of assistance for people interested in forming new cooperatives. This help can range from an initial feasibility study to the creation and implementation of a business plan. CS staff includes cooperative development specialists who do everything from identifying potential cooperative functions through developing bylaws and business plans. They also provide training for cooperative directors on operations, management and fiduciary responsibilities, and member information, among other topics.

CS also provides technical assistance to existing cooperatives on a full range of issues facing cooperative business enterprises to help improve a cooperative's business structure and operating efficiency. Examples of technical assistance include help in: assessing the economic feasibility of new facilities or adding new products or services, developing a strategic marketing plan to cope with new competitive forces, making a crucial decision about whether to merge or form a joint venture with other cooperatives, or finding ways to turn the raw products of cooperative members into value-added products.

Finally, CS conducts research, both internally and through cooperative agreements, to provide a knowledge base necessary to support cooperatives dealing with changing markets and business trends. Studies include financial, structural, managerial, policy, member governance, legal, and social issues, as well as various other economic activities of cooperatives. Research is designed to have direct application to current and emerging requirements of cooperatives. A major challenge is to analyze industry structure and cooperative operational practices to determine the changes required to maintain or achieve a producer-oriented marketing system. Recent research studies have focused on equity redemption plans used by cooperatives, identification of new niche markets for cooperatives, and opportunities and obstacles cooperatives face when exporting goods overseas.

## Project Examples

Cooperative Services has provided assistance to a variety of groups of rural producers wishing to add value to their products. Current and past projects include:

Working with a group of grain producers to determine the feasibility of forming a cooperative to add value to their grain by drying, storing, and marketing on a cooperative basis;

Helping small-scale hog producers organize a transportation and marketing cooperative, to help save on costs and gain access to packers;

Assisting the formation of a cooperative for rural women who produce hand-crafted gift items;

Conducting a feasibility analysis for dry edible bean producers and assisting them in organizing a marketing cooperative to increase their returns;

Assisting in the formation of an aquaculture cooperative that provides members with a facility to process, package and market crabmeat;

Working with a group of turkey farmers in formation of a cooperative to take over a closing processing plant, which saved and created jobs, and prevented turkey farmers from losing a viable market; and

Assisting the formation of vegetable marketing cooperatives that enabled small tobacco farmers to diversify into a variety of alternative crops.

## Information Available

Cooperative Services is the nation's leading resource for information, research and technical assistance relating to rural cooperatives. This information includes resource guides to educational programs for cooperatives, directories of rural cooperatives, management and financial guidelines. For a free catalog listing more than 200 USDA publications and videos about cooperatives, call (202) 690-0357 or see the website. Cooperative Services also publishes a bi-monthly magazine, *Rural Cooperatives*. Nominal fees are charged for some publications.

## Legislative Authority

Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946

## Application and Financial Information

With the exception of the Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program, (see p. 78), CS provides services to rural residents, not direct financial assistance.

## Eligibility

Currently, CS works almost exclusively with agricultural (including forest product) cooperatives. A legislative initiative is underway, however, to expand its authority to provide services to all rural cooperatives.

## Contact

CS staff members in the national office work in conjunction with cooperative development specialists located at many of USDA's state Rural Development offices; technical assistance is available through some of these offices (see Appendix). For educational programs and workshops, and further information about technical assistance available, please write to the national program office. For publications and videos about cooperatives, call (202) 720-7558 or see the website.

National Program Office
Randall E. Torgerson, Deputy Administrator
Cooperative Services
Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA
Stop 3250
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3250
(202) 720-7558; (202) 720-4641 - fax
Email: randall.torgerson@usda.gov

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/

# Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program (RCDG)

## *Grants for Establishing and Operating Centers for Cooperative Development*

The Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program was established under the 1996 Farm Bill to provide grants to nonprofit corporations and institutions of higher education for the primary purpose of improving the economic condition of rural areas through the development of new cooperatives and improving operations of existing cooperatives. Emphasis is placed on those projects with high potential to improve rural business activity through the cooperative form of business.

The 1996 Farm Bill removed Technology from the previous Rural Technology and Cooperative Development Grant (RTCDG) program, thereby directing the focus of the program specifically to cooperative development.

## Project Examples

The following are examples of cooperative development activities that could be funded under this program:

**Cooperative Development Centers**

Providing services to newly developing cooperatives in its geographic area on (1) organizational guidance, (2) cooperative development strategies, (3) business plans, and (4) feasibility analyses.

Arranging training on cooperative organization and management skills.

Developing expertise in financial management, bookkeeping/accounting, and cooperative law to enable hands-on assistance to developing cooperatives.

Evaluating the potential for development of a base of support for cooperative programs within local communities to assure needed leadership is mobilized.

**Other Cooperative Development Assistance**

This new program replaces the mandates of the Rural Technology and Cooperative Development Grants program. The following examples, funded under the old program, could also be considered under the new Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program:

Intertribal Value-Added Agricultural Cooperative Development: The Intertribal Agricultural Council, Inc. of Montana was awarded a grant to establish a cooperative Rural Development Center serving 42 Native American tribes in 20 states. The Center is assisting in the start-up, expansion, and operational funding for agricultural marketing and production cooperatives for the benefit of people located on rural Native American reservations in 20 states. A major function of the center is fostering working relationships and interdependence among the various reservation cooperatives in order to share experiences, build marketing and production networks, take advantage of value-added opportunities, and enhance inter-tribal cooperation.

Rocky Mountain Center for Cooperative Development: The grant provided funding to support the operation and expansion of the Regional Cooperative Development Center to cover three states (Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming) to fulfill the growing demands of the Rocky Mountain West by providing technical assistance and support to rural communities engaged in cooperative development initiatives.

## Information Available

Please see the entry for Cooperative Services.

## Legislative Authority

Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill)

## Application and Financial Information

An invitation for pre-applications for RCDG grants is published in the Federal Register each Spring. Funding available in FY 2000 was $40 million.

## Eligibility

Nonprofit corporations and institutions of higher education are eligible to receive grants.

## Uses and Restrictions

Grants may go to eligible recipients to form and operate centers for cooperative development--for providing education, research, and technical assistance to rural cooperatives and assisting the cooperative development process. Grants may be awarded for up to 75 percent of the total cost of the project. The applicant must contribute at least 25 percent from non-federal sources. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis and are based on specific selection criteria These criteria are published each year in Federal Register notices

## Contact

For information on the status of this program and other information, contact the national program office. The Internet site listed below is for USDA s Cooperative Services.

National Program Office
James E. Haskell
Assistant Deputy Administrator
Cooperative Services,
Rural Business-Cooperative Services
Stop 3250, Room 4016 South Building
1400 Independence Ave S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-3250
(202) 720-8460; (202) 720-4641 - fax
Email:james.haskell@usda.gov

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/rcdg.htm

# The SCORE Association — "Counselors to America's Small Business"

### *Management and Mentoring Assistance for Small Businesses*

SCORE is a nonprofit organization sponsored by the Small Business Administration (SBA) dedicated to helping small businesses prosper since 1964. SCORE s 389 locally organized, self-administered chapters offer services throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Volunteers are trained as counselors, advisers and mentors to work in management and training for existing small businesses and for those considering going into business.

SCORE attempts to match clients needs with a counselor whose experience is in a comparable line of business. Check with your local SCORE office to determine if counselors with relevant expertise are available. SCORE can offer pre-business counseling, existing business counseling and mentoring sessions for no charge. SCORE also provides low-cost local workshops on business planning, management, financing and marketing. If no local counselor has relevant experience, search online at www.score.org to establish e-mail counseling sessions. Log on and click Get E-mail Counseling.

## Project Examples

A policy of client confidentiality prevents SCORE staff from providing examples for this guide.

## Application and Financial Information

Potential clients should contact their local SBA or SCORE office to request a meeting with a counselor. The SCORE chapter volunteers will check their rosters to attempt to pair clients with counselors who have relevant business experience.

## Eligibility

Any small independent business can receive help from SCORE. Clients need not have an SBA loan to receive support. SCORE services also are available to nonprofit associations.

## Uses and Restrictions

SCORE is a free business counseling service available to all American businesses.

## Contact

To locate the SCORE office nearest you, check your local telephone directory or call 1-800-634-0245 or send a fax to (202) 205-7636. For the hearing impaired, the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

National Program Office
The SCORE Association
409 Third Street, S.W., 6th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20024
E-mail: contact.score@sba.gov

## Internet

www.score.org

Visit SCORE s award-winning web site for more than 2,000 pages of small business how to and trend articles, to find your nearest counseling location and to get e-mail counseling.

# Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program

## *Short-Term Training and Counseling for Small Businesses in Central and Easily Accessible Branch Locations*

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) administers the Small Business Development Center Program (SBDC) to provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners. The program is a cooperative effort of the private sector, the educational community and federal, state and local governments. It enhances economic development by providing small businesses with management and technical assistance.

The SBDC Program is designed to deliver up-to-date counseling, training and technical assistance in all aspects of small business management. SBDC services include, but are not limited to, assisting small businesses with financial, marketing, production, organization, engineering and technical problems and feasibility studies. Special SBDC programs and economic development activities include international trade assistance, technical assistance, procurement assistance, venture capital formation and rural development.

There are 58 small business development centers one in every state (Texas has four), the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and American Samoa with a network of nearly 1,000 service locations. In each state a lead organization sponsors the SBDC and manages the program. The lead organization coordinates the programs and services which are offered to small businesses through a network of subcenters and satellite locations in each state. Subcenters are located at numerous colleges, universities, community colleges, vocational schools, chambers of commerce and economic development corporations.

The SBDCs make special efforts to reach members of socially and economically disadvantaged groups, veterans, women and the disabled. SBDCs also provide assistance to small businesses applying for Small Business Innovation and Research (SBIR) grants from federal agencies.

SBDC assistance is tailored to the local community and the needs of individual clients. Each center develops services in cooperation with local SBA district offices to ensure statewide coordination with other available resources.

Each center has a director, staff members, volunteers and part-time personnel. Qualified individuals recruited from professional and trade associations, the legal and banking community, academia, chambers of commerce and SCORE (the Service Corps of Retired Executives) are among those who donate their services. SBDCs also use paid consultants, consulting engineers and testing laboratories from the private sector to help clients who need specialized expertise.

The SBA provides 50 percent or less of the operating funds for each state SBDC; one or more sponsors provide the rest. These matching fund contributions are provided by state legislatures, private sector foundations and grants, state and local chambers of commerce, state-chartered economic development corporations, public and private universities, vocational and technical schools, community colleges, etc. Increasingly, sponsors contributions exceed the minimum 50 percent matching share.

## Project Examples

Client confidentiality prohibits SBDC staff from providing examples.

## Eligibility

Assistance from an SBDC is available to anyone interested in beginning a small business for the first time or improving or expanding an existing small business, who cannot afford the services of a private consultant.

## Uses and Restrictions

Specific uses and offerings vary among SBDCs. Some may have programs or offerings specifically directed at agricultural businesses while others may not. Contact your local SBDC for additional information.

## Contact

For additional information or to take advantage of SBDC offerings, contact the SBDC located nearest to you. There are 58 SBDCs at least one in every state (Texas has four), the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and American Samoa. A lead organization in each state sponsors and manages the SBDC program. The lead centers are as follows:

### Region I (Boston)

University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME
(207) 780-4420
University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
(413) 545-6301
University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
(860)486-4135
Bryant College, Smithfield, RI
(401) 232-6111
Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center, VT
(802) 728-9101
University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
(603) 862-4879

### Region II (New York)

Rutgers University, Newark, NJ
(973) 353-1927
State University of New York, Albany, NY
(518) 443-5398
University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands
(340) 776-3206
Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Hato Rey, PR
(787) 763-6811

### Region III (Philadelphia)

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
(215) 898-1219
Howard University, Washington, DC
(202) 806-1550 ext. 208
University of Delaware, Newark, DE
(302) 831-2747
W. Virginia Development Office, Charleston, WV
(304) 558-2960
University of Maryland, College Park, MD
(301) 403-8300
Department of Economic Development, Richmond VA
(804) 371-8251

### Region IV (Atlanta)

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC
(803)777-4907
University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL
(850) 595-6060
University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL
(205) 943-6750
University of Georgia, Athens, GA
(706) 542-6762
University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY
(606) 257-7668
University of Mississippi, University, MS
(662) 915-5001
Board of Regents, Nashville, TN
(615) 366-3931
University of North Carolina, Raleigh, NC
(919) 715-7272

### Region V (Chicago)

University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
(608) 263-7794
Dept. of Trade and Economic Development, St. Paul, MN
(651) 297-5770
Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
(313) 964-1798
Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Springfield, IL
(217) 524-5856
Economic Development Council, Indianapolis, IN
(317) 264-2820 ext.17
Department of Develpment, Columbus, OH
(614) 466-2711

### Region VI (Dallas)

University of Arkansas, Little Rock, AR
(501) 324-9043
Northeast Louisiana Univerity, Monroe, LA
(318) 342-5506
SE Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK
(405) 924-0277
University of Houston, Houston, TX
(713) 752-8425
University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX
(210) 458-2450
Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX
(806) 745-3973
Dallas County Community College, Dallas, TX 75215
(214) 860-5835
Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, NM
(505) 428-1362

### Region VII (Kansas City)

University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE
(402) 554-2521
Iowa State University, Ames, IA
(515)292-6351

University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
(573) 882-0344
Fort Hays State University, Topeka, KS
(785)296-6514

### Region VIII (Denver)

Salt Lake Community College, Salt Lake City, UT
(801) 957-3481
University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD
(605) 677-5287
University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
(701) 777-3700
Department of Commerce, Helena, MT
(406) 444-4780
Office of Economic Development, Denver, CO
(303) 892-3794
University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY
(307) 766-3505

### Region IX (San Francisco)

American Samoa Community College, Pago Pago, AS
011-684-699-9155 x 370
University of Nevada in Reno, Reno, NV
(775) 784-1717
Maricopa County Community College, Tempe, AZ
(480) 731-8720
University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hilo, HI
(808) 974-7515
California Trade & Commerce, Sacramento, CA
(916) 324-9538
University of Guam, Mangilao, Guam
(671) 735-2590

### Region X (Seattle)

Washington State University, Spokane, WA
(509) 358-7765
Lane Community College, Eugene, OR
(541) 726-2250
Boise State University, Boise, ID
(208) 426-3799
University of Alaska at Anchorage, Anchorage, AK
(907) 274-7232

# Small Farmer Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program

## *Grants to Educational Institutions and Nonprofit Organizations that Provide Outreach, Training, and Technical Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers*

This program is designed to reverse the decline of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. The intended outcome is to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms, participate in agricultural programs, and become an integral part of the agricultural community.

## Project Examples

The following are examples of funded projects:

Providing assistance to farmers in marketing strategies and improvements, including the processing and marketing of food products through a food park developed in conjunction with a local chamber of commerce. The project also includes assistance to farmer participants to provide access to new markets and adding value (such as packing capabilities) to joint marketing efforts. The overall goal of the project is to increase net yields for participaing small and disadvantaged farmers.

Providing farm planning and marketing assistance to increase the variety (including reintroducing native plants) of vegetables. Participation in the project also enables the farmers to pursue continuing education toward a degree in agricultural fields. The overall goal is to increase farmer yields by better meeting food security and nutrition needs of local customers.

Providing training workshops and meetings (68) on farm management and record-keeping, as well as marketing topics. As a result of these and other project activities, 121 farmers were assisted in developing farm and home plans; 88 farmers began using record-keeping systems; 49 farmers secured loans from commercial banks and 29 secured loans from Farm Service Agency (FSA); 21 farmers completed conservation plans; and six farmers graduated from FSA credit to commercial sources. The project also developed a demonstration on how to grow greens and an eight week residential program for youth on beginning agriculture.

## Legislative Authority

Section 2501 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990.

## Application and Financial Information

Any requests for proposals appear in the Federal Register. Eligible educational institutions and community-based organizations should submit a written proposal to the address given in the Federal Register. Notice of action taken on proposals will generally be given within 90 days of the proposal submission deadline.

## Eligibility

Eligible institutions include community-based institutions, land-grant colleges, including Tuskegee University, Indian tribal community colleges and Alaska Native cooperative colleges, and Hispanic-serving post-secondary educational institutions that: (1) have demonstrated experience in providing agricultural education or other agriculturally related services to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; (2) provide documentary evidence of past experience in working with socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers during the two years preceding the application for assistance; and (3) do not engage in activities prohibited under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Applicants must have the financial, legal, administrative, and operational capacity to carry out the objectives of the program. Applicants should provide a certification of all members of the applicant/applicant entity including name, gender, race and national origin.

## Uses and Restrictions

Educational and community-based organizations receive grants to provide outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate in USDA programs and services. Assistance includes information on farm management -- operating a farm or ranch to produce income adequate to service debt, maintain farm or ranch operations, and provide a reasonable standard of living; application and bidding procedures; and other essential information needed to participate in USDA programs and services.

## Contact

National Program Office
Sherie Hinton Henry
Acting Director
(202) 720-6350; (800) 880-4183
(202) 720-7489 - fax

# IV. Marketing Assistance

Also see:

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas
Forest Products Conservation and Recycling
Cooperative Services
Community Facilities Loan Program

# Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)

***Matching Grants for Marketing Agricultural Products through State Departments of Agriculture***

The Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) provides matching funds, on a competitive basis, to State departments of agriculture or similar state agencies to conduct studies or develop innovative approaches related to the marketing of agricultural products. Federal funds in the amount of $1.2 million have been provided for this program in the Department of Agriculture budget in most recent years.

FSMIP funds can be requested for a wide range of research and service work aimed at improving the marketing system or identifying new market opportunities for food and other agricultural products. While all proposals that meet the matching funds requirement and fall within FSMIP guidelines will be considered, States are especially encouraged to develop projects that will benefit small, limited resource farmers, including projects involving partnership arrangements with producer groups and community-based organizations interested in pursuing local or regional food system strategies.

## Project Examples

Iowa -- A $55,000 grant to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to enhance the economic viability of local food production systems through direct marketing to Iowa institutions.

Kansas -- A $55,000 grant to Kansas State University, in cooperation with the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing, to identify market opportunities for new varieties of hard white wheat, and determine the costs and benefits of preserving the identity of hard wheat varieties throughout the distribution process.

Montana -- A $48,000 grant to the Montana Department of Agriculture, with Montana State University and others, to assess marketing opportunities for specialty herbs and oil crops grown in western Montana.

Vermont -- A $31,000 grant to the Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food and Markets, in cooperation with other northeastern States, to further develop an infrastructure for collecting and marketing high-quality sheep and goat genetic material.

Washington -- A $60,000 grant to the Washington State Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association, for market research and development of an interactive database that will allow oyster farmers to more easily form cooperative networks and develop strategies for business success.

For project descriptions from other states, please see the FSMIP website or call the national office.

## Legislative Authority

Section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946

## Application and Financial Information

In recent years, available funds have been allocated to approximately 25 projects each year. Lists of the projects, by state, and the amounts of federal funds provided for each project during the past five years can be viewed on the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/fsmip.htm.

Funds are allocated on the basis of two rounds of competition annually, with approximately one-half of the FSMIP appropriation involved in each round. Typically, proposals received by early February are considered for the first round of fund allocations and by early May for the second round. Successful applicants can expect to have project approvals in place by May 1 for first-round allocations and by September 1 for second-round allocations.

## Eligibility

Only state departments of agriculture or similar state agencies are eligible to apply for direct funding. However, others, including producers and industry organizations, interested in initiating and developing proposals and projects are encouraged to work with state departments of agriculture.

## Uses and Restrictions

Funding is not authorized for advertising or promotion. FSMIP also is not designed to support long-term, basic research or, with limited exceptions, to support capital improvements or equipment purchases.

## Contact

Organizations interested in the development of a proposal should contact their state department of agriculture or the national program office for additional information and guidance.

National Program Office
Debra Tropp
Acting FSMIP staff officer
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
P.O. Box 96456, Room 4006-S
Washington, D.C. 20090-6456
(202) 720-2704
(202) 690-4948 (fax)
Email: debra.tropp@usda.gov

## Internet

www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/fsmip.htm

# Market Access Program (MAP)

***Matching Funds for Export Market Development Activities such as Consumer Promotions, Market Research, Technical Assistance and Trade Servicing***

The Market Access Program (MAP) encourages the development, maintenance and expansion of commercial export markets for agricultural products by helping U.S. producers, exporters, private companies and other trade organizations finance promotional activities. Funds are provided on a reimbursable basis with a cost-share requirement for consumer promotions, market research, technical assistance, and trade servicing. MAP divides its funding between (1) branded product promotion--where small businesses and cooperatives are given priority; and (2) generic product promotion--where funds go to the four state and regional trade groups, state departments of agriculture and the national trade associations/commodities groups. For the branded program, private companies can apply directly to MAP. Many producers and companies apply through one of the state and regional trade groups representing the agricultural interests of the eastern, western, southern, and mid-American states or the national trade associations/commodities groups, if they have branded programs. Since some of the national trade associations/commodities groups do not have branded programs, such as American Forest and Paper Products, companies apply directly to MAP. FAS and four State and Regional Trade Groups have outreach programs for small companies and producers interested in developing export markets, accessing market research, and developing new products.

Since its inception in 1985, the MAP and its predecessors, the Targeted Export Assistance Program and the Market Promotion Program, have provided cost-share funds to nearly 800 U.S. companies, cooperatives, and trade associations to promote their products overseas. In that period, total U.S. agricultural exports have doubled, from $26.3 billion -- the first year of the program--to $53.6 billion in 1998. The Export Incentive Program (EIP), which is part of the MAP, helps U.S. commercial entities conduct brand promotion activities including advertising, trade shows, in-store demonstrations, and trade seminars.

MAP is one of two programs used by FAS for export market promotions; also see the Foreign Market Development Program (FMD) entry.

## Project Examples

USDA has approved MAP proposals to promote a wide variety of U.S. food and fiber products, including: apples, asparagus, canned peaches and fruit cocktail, catfish, cherries, citrus, cotton, dairy products, dry beans, eggs, feed grains, frozen potatoes, ginseng, grapes, honey, hops, kiwifruit, meat, peanuts, pears, pet food, pistachios, poultry meat, prunes, raisins, rice, salmon, soybeans, strawberries, sunflower seeds, surimi, tallow, tomato products, walnuts, and wheat.

Specific examples of funded projects include:

**Generic programs**

Promotion of U.S. forest products in Europe through conferences and demonstration projects.

Promotion of sunflower kernel in Germany through trade shows, advertising, and public relations.

**Brand identified promotion program**

Promotion of branded citrus in the Far East and Europe

Promotion of branded almonds by increasing consumer awareness in Japan, France, and the U.K.

Promotions by state groups of a variety of high value products worldwide.

## Legislative Authority

Section 203 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

Under the MAP, funds from USDA s Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) are used to partially reimburse program participants conducting foreign market development projects for eligible products in specified countries Each year USDA announces an application period for participation in the MAP and publishes it in the Federal Register. Proposals for the MAP are developed by trade organizations and private firms and submitted to USDA Under branded product promotion activities, individual companies must provide at least a 50% funding match; under generic promotion activities, trade associations and others must meet a minimum 10-percent match requirement. Applications are evaluated based on the following criteria: (1) contribution level, (2) export performance, (3) projected export goals, and (4) accuracy of past export projections, if relevant.

After approval by USDA, participating organizations or firms sign a program agreement with the CCC Authority to expend promotional resources is a two-stage process First, FAS must approve each recipient's application for funds and set a yearly allocation level, overall program ceiling, budget ceilings by country for branded and generic activities, amount of branded funds targeted for small-sized entities, and conditions relating to the conduct of the year's program. In the second stage, the recipient must submit a detailed plan fully describing proposed activities, cost categories, and resources to be contributed by the recipient.

MAP program requirements for participation include cost-sharing, strategic planning, export goals, and activity evaluations Information required from participants includes the estimated increase in exports and market share that would result from the proposed promotion, the participant's program management capabilities, and the organization's contribution toward cost-sharing.

## Eligibility

Proposals for the MAP are developed by trade organizations and private firms and submitted to USDA. Small businesses and cooperatives are given priority

## Uses and Restrictions

Participants are required to certify that federal funds used under the program are used to supplement, and not supplant, private sector funds. Promotion of brand products in a single country is generally limited to no more than five years.

## Contact

To submit a MAP proposal or to find out how to do so, contact the national program office. Please see our website for more information.

National Program Office
USDA/FAS
Marketing Operations Staff
Stop 1042
1400 Independence Ave.SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-1042
(202) 720-4327; (202) 720-9361 - fax

## Internet

www.fas.usda.gov/info/factsheets/mapfact.html

# National Organic Program

## *Will Provide National Organic Certification Standards, Accreditation for Certifying Agencies and Information*

The National Organic Program (NOP) is in the process of developing uniform federal standards related to the production, processing and marketing of organically produced foods. Once the national organic standards are finalized, state and private organizations will be accredited as organic certifiers through NOP. Farmers, processors and handling operators seeking organic certification can then be certified and inspected annually by these accredited organizations at the state and local level.

Established in the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, NOP was created to develop credible national organic standards, ensure consumer confidence and facilitate trade. The NOP is charged with developing this in conjunction with the NOSB, an advisory committee of farmers, consumer advocates, scientists and others. Currently, a variety of both state and private certifiers carry out such activities and organic product certification, although accreditation of organic certifiers is not required in all states. The final regulation, which is expected to be published in early 2001, will establish the federal organic standards and labeling regulations. NOP is also working with other nations to develop international guidelines for organic foods.

### Information Available

Once the national organic standards are finalized, the NOP national program office will maintain a list of accredited certifiers and can provide an interested operation with a list of accredited certifiers. NOP also will maintain a list of materials approved for use in organic agriculture and provide information to all interested parties. Once these standards are finalized, NOP will also work with the Cooperative Extension System and through nonprofit organizations to disseminate information about certification through county extension agents. The NOP regulation also will include a list of materials approved for use in organic agriculture and provide information to all interested parties. Once these standards are finalized, NOP also will work with the Cooperative Extension system and through nonprofit organizations to disseminate information about certification through county extension agents. NOP will work with NOSB to maintain a list of materials.

### Legislative Authority

Title XXI--Organic Certification--of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill).

### Contact

Please contact the national program office to determine the status of the national organic standards.

National Program Office
Keith Jones
Program Manager, National Organic Program
Transportation and Marketing Division
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
Room 2945 South Bldg., Stop 0275
P.O. Box 96456
Washington, D.C. 20090-6456
(202) 720-3252; (202) 690-3924 - fax

# Research and Promotion Program (R&P)

***Provides Guidance and Oversight to Commodity Groups to Develop an Industry Self-Help Program to Strengthen that Commodity's Position in the Marketplace***

The research and promotion programs are designed to strengthen the position of products in the marketplace by developing new markets, improving the quality of products, and finding better and cheaper ways of producing the products. They enable producers and processors, large and small, to combine their economic resources to conduct projects that would not be economically feasible by individual producers or businesses. These programs are industry-funded, but AMS has oversight responsibility for the administration and disbursement of funds. There currently are programs in effect for beef, cotton, dairy products, eggs, fluid milk, honey, mushrooms, peanuts, popcorn, pork, potatoes, soybeans, and watermelon.

Research and promotion programs are authorized by specific legislation which establishes the parameters of the promotional effort. These research and promotion programs are administered by industry producers, processors, handlers, importers, and/or consumers established as a board or council to carry out the requirements of each act. Representatives of these groups are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. Annual budgets and plans for these programs are approved by the Secretary and the appropriate AMS program area.

## Project Examples

The Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act has provided funds for new product research that has resulted in soybeans being used as substitutes for other items ranging from food to ink.

## Information Available

See the AMS Home Page located at www.ams.usda.gov for detailed information about each of the AMS Research and Promotion Programs.

## Legislative Authority

The research and promotion program for each commodity is governed by authorizing legislation specific to that commodity.

## Application and Financial Information

All research and promotion programs are funded from assessments the commodity industry agrees to place upon itself. The amount of the assessment is voted upon by all who would be required to pay this assessment. Annual budgets and plans for these programs are approved by the Secretary of Agriculture and the appropriate AMS program area. Industry assessments also cover USDA s expenses for providing oversight to the operation of these programs.

## Contact

**National Program Office**
Associate Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
Room 3069-S, STOP Code 0201
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0201
(202) 720-4276; (202) 720-8477 - fax

## Internet

www.ams.usda.gov/

# Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program (W&AM)

### *Feasibility Studies for Wholesale and Farmers' Markets in the Form of Cooperative Agreements, Technical Assistance, Information and Data*

The purpose of the Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program (W&AM) is to promote regional economic development and improve market access for the small- and medium- sized farmer, thus enhancing the overall effectiveness of the food marketing system and providing better quality products to the consumer at reasonable cost. The program provides technical assistance, information and data to assist in developing feasibility studies for wholesale, collection, farmers , and direct markets. Limited funds are available to facilitate the acquisition of data for studies through cooperative agreements. While individuals may seek information from W&AM staff, funding for cooperative agreements for technical assistance in developing these facilities must be associated with State or local government agencies, farmers cooperatives, or non-profit organizations and should receive endorsement from the State department of agriculture. While this program is focused on farm products, proposals related to forest-based product markets would also be considered.

W&AM uses staff agricultural marketing specialists, engineers, and economists and university, state and other government agency professionals to form teams that perform marketing and facilities studies. Project teams also include customers and stakeholders such as small- to medium-sized growers, consumers, state departments of agriculture, market vendors and operators, city/county governments, and agricultural cooperatives.

Specifically, the W&AM Program:

- Identifies and defines projects related to markets development. Activities include conducting research and analysis related to project feasibility studies.
- Identifies facility design alternatives for market construction or renovation.
- Evaluates specialized markets and facilities for specific crops and product volumes. This effort focuses on marketing strategies to open larger markets to farmers with small- to medium-sized operations.
- Prepares and provides customers with resource materials related to developing markets or gaining access to them.
- Exchanges information and makes public presentations before cooperator (state, municipal and private) and professional / industry organizations to convey study findings.

## Project Examples

- *Thomasville, GA., Regional Market Facility Study* This study was conducted in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Agriculture to evaluate the feasibility of upgrading the present market or building a new facility for the collection and assembly of produce grown in Southern Georgia. This auction market provides access to the mass market for small- and medium-sized farmers 67 counties in Florida, Alabama, and Georgia.
- *A Review of Little Rock s River Farmers Market Operations* This study was conducted in cooperation with the City of Little Rock to develop criteria for business and operational improvements at the market which opened in 1996. The study cited the need for attracting small farmers, locally produced farm products, and fresh specialty products.
- *Fort Worth Farmers Market* This study was conducted in cooperation with Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau, and other city businesses to develop a farmers market on a permanent site in downtown Fort Worth. Specific objectives were; to determine facility and space requirements and develop conceptual designs; identify functional and operational features of market facilities, design options, and potential operating constraints; develop detailed construction cost estimates; and develop a business plan for operating the new market facilities.

## Information Available

A description of program activities and listing of publications can be accessed via the internet at www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing/. Contact the national program office to receive copies of desired publications.

## Legislative Authority

Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946

## Application and Funding Information

W&AM provides funds through a cooperative agreement in which all money passes from USDA to a State s department of agriculture, educational institutions, state or local government agencies, farmers cooperatives, or non-profit organizations. There is no maximum amount for cooperative agreements, and funding for large projects may be spread over several years. The average agreement amount is $25,000.

## Eligibility

Technical assistance, information and data can be provided to anyone upon request. Cooperative agreements for a feasibility study linked to a marketing facility can only be made with government agencies, educational institutions, farmers cooperatives, or non-profit organizations. Individuals are not eligible for assistance. Proposed projects in which findings would be useful to others and which are targeted to economically disadvantage minority farmers are given preference.

## Uses and Restrictions

W&AM can provide financial and technical support only for a marketing feasibility study for a new market or an existing market to be expanded. Funds cannot be used to build a market. See the Community Facilities Program and the Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program for funding available for construction and renovation of farmers markets and agricultural fairgrounds. W&AM projects must have an agriculture imperative. This can include forest-based products.

## Contact

Contact the national program office for applications and further information.

National Program Office
Program Manager
Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program
Transportation and Marketing
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
Room 2642 South Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250
(202) 720-8317; (202) 690-0031 - fax

## Internet

www.usda.gov/ams/tmd.htm
www.usda.gov/ams/directmarketing.htm
www.usda.gov/ams/farmersmarkets.htm

# Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

***Matching Support to Market Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and Strengthen Farmers Markets. For Participating Low-Income, At-Risk Women, Infants and Children, the Program Provides Coupons or Checks to Obtain Locally Grown Fresh Produce from Farmers Markets***

The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), established in 1992, provides special coupons to WIC participants (low-income, at-risk women, infants and children) so that they can purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets. FMNP is funded through a congressionally mandated set-aside in the WIC appropriation. The program has two goals: to provide fresh, nutritious, unprepared food, such as fruits and vegetables, from farmers markets to WIC participants; and to expand consumers awareness and use of farmers markets.

This program, operated in conjunction with the regular WIC Program, is offered in 9 states and other jurisdictions. State agencies may limit FMNP sales to specific foods that are locally grown to encourage participants to support the farmers in their own state.

## Project Examples

In Pennsylvania the FMNP operates in 67 counties at 313 market sites. Approximately 475 farmers participated in the 1998 market season. In 1998 the FMNP paid Pennsylvania farmers a total of $1.1 million for fresh fruit and produce grown in Pennsylvania. At the same time, the Pennsylvania program supported 110,400 WIC participants who received checks which were redeemed for fresh produce at farmers markets.

The Iowa FMNP functions in 89 farmers markets in 43 counties of the state serving approximately 50,415 recipients. Farmers participate in a short training course which outlines the rules and procedures of the program, and are certified to received WIC checks at specific farmers markets where they sell their fresh fruit and vegetables. WIC checks valuing $650,000 were issued for redemption by Iowa farmers in 1998.

The FMNP in the State of Maryland operates in all but three of the state s 21 counties and in the City of Baltimore. There are 45 participating farmers markets which served more than 48,000 recipients in 1998. During the same year a total of $250,000 was available for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables from 315 authorized farmers as a result of participating in the FMNP. Many WIC participants had never shopped in a farmers market before participating in the program, and continue to shop at farmers markets after their WIC checks have been spent.

## Application and Financial Information

Grants for administering the program are made to state health, agriculture and other agencies (or Indian tribes, bands, or intertribal councils or groups recognized by the Department of the Interior). Participating state agencies must initiate the process by applying for participation in the program.

The program requires a match from program income or state, local, or private funds for the program in an amount that is equal to but not less than 30% of the total cost of the program (except Indian Tribal Organizations which may receive a negotiated match contribution that is less than 30% but not less than 10%). The matching requirement may be satisfied from state contributions that are made for similar programs. Federal FMNP benefits (coupons) may be issued only to participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) or to persons who are on a waiting list to receive WIC benefits.

The FMNP budget for FY 1999 was $15 million. Currently the program is authorized through 2003. The level of funding is determined annually and must be approved by Congress.

## Eligibility

WIC participants (i.e., pregnant, postpartum or breastfeeding women; infants over 4 months of age, and children up to 5 years of age) and (at the state's discretion) those who are on a waiting list to receive WIC benefits are eligible to receive FMNP coupons.

Farmers or farmers markets located in communities with WIC Program sites may apply to the state agency authorized to accept FMNP coupons. In states where the program is not currently operating, farmers should approach the appropriate state agency (e.g. Department of Agriculture or the Department of Health and Human Services) to ask them to develop a project, obtain state matching funds, and apply for federal funding to initiate the FMNP in their state.

## Uses and Restrictions

All state agencies that desire to receive a FMNP grant must submit, for each fiscal year, a state plan to the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA. New state agencies are then selected based on evaluation criteria and the availability of funds. Local FMNP sites are selected by participating state agencies based on concentration of eligible WIC participants and access to farmers' markets.

## Contact

Northeast Region
John Ghiorzi, Regional Director
(617) 565-6440

Mid-Atlantic Region
Patricia A. Cumiskey-Czoto, Regional Director
(609) 259-5100

Southeast Region
Peggy Fouts, Regional Director
(404) 562-7100

Midwest Region
Sandra Slayton, Regional Director
(312) 886-6625

Southwest Region
Sondra Ralph, Regional Director
(214) 290-9812

Mountain Plains Region
Ralph Anzur, Regional Director
(303) 844-0331

Western Region
Carol M. Fahey, Regional Director
(415) 705-1313

National Office
Patricia N. Daniels, Director
Supplemental Food Programs Division,
Food and Nutrition Service
Department of Agriculture
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 540
Alexandria, VA 22302
(703) 305-2746; (703) 305-2196 - fax

## Internet

www.usda.gov/fns/wic.htm

# V. Conservation and Resource Management

**Also see:**
**Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)**

# Conservation Reserve Program

## *Offers Contracts for Highly Erodible and Other Environmentally Sensitive Cropland for 10 to 15 years if Landowners Establish and Maintain Perennial Vegetation and Agree to Leave the Land Idle for the Length of the Contract*

The CRP offers landowners, operators and tenants the opportunity to voluntarily convert land with high erosion rates and other environmentally sensitive land to permanent vegetative cover. Permanent cover options include grasses and legumes, tree plantings, and wildlife habitat. The program goals are: to reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve water quality, protect the soils on the nation's cropland base, demonstrate good land stewardship and improve rural aesthetics.

The program aims to protect the nation's long-term ability to produce food and fiber by effectively managing agricultural resources, reducing soil erosion, reducing sedimentation, improving water quality, creating a better habitat for fish and wildlife, providing some needed income support for farmers and curbing production of some surplus commodities.

Financial and technical assistance are available to participants to assist in the establishment of a permanent vegetative cover.

## Project Examples

Marginal cropland in Mississippi, planted to soybeans, is at continual risk of erosion due to sandy, silty soils and a slope too great for tillage. One landowner chose to convert a portion of his land to pine trees as permanent cover through CRP. The cost of planting was about $60/acre, including the seedlings and paying a contractor for machine planting. CRP paid the landowner $30/acre, or 50 percent of the cost of conversion, plus $36/acre annual rental payment. The land is protected from severe erosion with tree cover, and additional income could come from thinning the trees in 13-16 years.

In Wisconsin an elderly dairy farming couple with no son or daughter to take over the farm wanted to sell their dairy operation, but could not find a young farmer interested in buying it. Their land has shallow soils, has been contour-stripped since the 1950s, and is highly erodible. The couple was able to sell their cows and machinery and put 200 acres into CRP (leaving the remaining 100 acres in pasture and woodlot). For 10 years they receive $80/acre for their land which is seeded to grass to protect it from erosion.

In New Mexico, certain highly erodible land had a history of being cultivated when wheat and soybean prices were high, and abandoned when prices dropped, leaving the topsoil exposed to wind erosion. Some of these lands were entered into CRP, enabling farmers to plant a cover grass to protect and conserve the topsoil for future cultivation after the 10 years of the CRP, and they still receive income for 10 years from the land.

## Legislative Authority

Food Security Act of 1985, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

To initiate the application procedure, a landowner must submit a rental rate per acre bid to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office that serves the area in which the farm or ranch is located during the announced sign up period. Those whose bids are accepted will be notified from seven to 90 days from the date of submission of the application.

County FSA offices will provide producers the maximum acceptable rental rate for the acreage offered. All offers will be screened at both the local and national levels to determine the suitability of the acreage and acceptability of the rental rate bid. In addition, offers will be evaluated in terms of cost for the environmental benefits obtained. Acres accepted will be limited to pre-announced levels for each sign up period. Financial assistance ranges from $50 to $50,000 with $5,000 being the average nationally.

## Eligibility

Any individual, partnership, association, Indian tribal ventures corporation, estate, trust, other business enterprise or legal entity and, whenever applicable, a state, a political subdivision of a state, or any agency thereof owning or operating private croplands, and state or local government croplands may apply.

## Uses and Restrictions

Eligible owners or operators may place highly erodible or environmentally sensitive land into a 10-15 year contract. The participant, in return for annual payments, agrees to implement a conservation plan approved by the local conservation district for converting highly erodible cropland or environmentally sensitive land to a less intensive use (i.e., cropland must be planted with a vegetative cover, such as perennial grasses, legumes, forbs, shrubs, or trees).

The cropland must be owned or operated for at least twelve months prior to the close of the annual sign-up period, unless the land was acquired by will or succession or the FSA determines that ownership was not acquired for the purpose of placing the land in the conservation reserve.

## Contact

For additional information, contact your local Farm Service Agency Office. (Consult the local phone directory under U.S. Government, U.S. Department of Agriculture.)

National Program Office
Bob Stephenson
Director
Conservation and Environmental Programs Division
USDA/FSA/CEPD/STOP 0513
Washington, DC 20250-0513
(202) 720-6221
(202) 720-4619 (fax)

## Internet

www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crpinfo.htm

# Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

## *Provides Technical, Financial and Educational Assistance to Farmers and Ranchers to Address Significant Natural Resource Concerns and Objectives*

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was established in the 1996 Farm Bill to provide a single, voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers to address significant natural resource needs and objectives. At the national level, half of the program s resources are targeted to livestock-related natural resource problems and the other half to more general conservation priorities.

EQIP replaces four previous programs: the Agricultural Conservation Program, Water Quality Incentives Program, Great Plains Conservation Program, and the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

EQIP works primarily in priority areas where there are serious and critical environmental needs and resource concerns. In general, priority areas are defined as watersheds, regions or areas of special environmental sensitivity or those having significant soil, water, or related natural resource concerns. Priority is also given to areas where state or local governments offer financial or technical assistance and where agricultural improvements will help meet water quality and other environmental objectives. Highest priority will be given to farmers and ranchers that face the most serious threats to soil, water, and related natural resources including grazing lands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. All EQIP activities must be carried out according to a conservation plan.

## Legislative Authority

1996 Farm Bill

## Application and Financial Information

EQIP offers five- to 10-year contracts that provide incentive payments and cost sharing for conservation practices called for in a site-specific plan. Incentive payments are made to enable a producer to perform a land management practices that would not otherwise be initiated without financial assistance. The payments may reimburse the producer for a percentage of the costs of carrying out the practice, but not longer than three years. Land management practices are conservation practices that require site-specific techniques and methods to conserve natural resources. Examples include nutrient management, manure management, integrated pest management, irrigation water management, grazing management, and wildlife habitat management. EQIP also provides cost-share assistance for up to 75 percent of the cost of vegetative and structural conservation practices, such as grassed waterways, filter strips, manure management facilities, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

Contract applications are accepted throughout the year. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conducts an evaluation of the environmental benefits the producer offers. Offers are then ranked according to previously approved criteria developed with the advice of the local work group. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee approves for funding the highest priority applications based on the previously developed criteria. Applications are ranked according to environmental benefits achieved, and are weighted against the costs of applying the proposed practices. Higher rankings are given to plans addressing priority resource concerns. EQIP seeks to maximize environmental benefits per dollar spent.

Funding for EQIP comes from the Federal Government's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), which funds several other USDA conservation programs. CCC funding does not require annual appropriations, and the program is less vulnerable to budget cuts. EQIP is funded at $200 million per year through the year 2002. Conservation practices related to livestock production are targeted with these funds and will receive 50 percent of the funding. Total cost-share and incentive payments are limited to $10,000 per person per year and $50,000 for the length of the contract.

## Eligibility

Only people who are engaged in agricultural production can apply for this program. Eligible land includes cropland, rangeland, pasture, forest land, and other farm or ranch lands.

Owners of large confined livestock operations are not eligible for cost-share assistance for animal waste management storage or treatment facilities, although financial assistance for other conservation practices on the farm or ranch may be provided. The definition of a large confined livestock operation can be determined for each state by the NRCS State Conservationist, after consultation with the NRCS State Technical Committee and approval from the chief of NRCS.

In accordance with the 1996 Farm Bill, the program is targeted to priority areas where there are significant natural resource needs and objectives established. At least 65% of the funds are to be used in locally-identified priority areas, and up to 35% can be used for significant statewide natural resource concerns.

The rationale for placing program emphasis in priority areas is that more resources will be directed to address serious and critical environmental needs and concerns. These priority areas are determined by a process that begins with local work groups, involving local conservation districts, USDA's NRCS, FSA, FSA county committees, Cooperative Extension Service, tribes, and other units of government interested in natural resource conservation. These groups conduct a conservation needs assessment, identify local priorities, determine ranking criteria, and then send their recommendations for priority areas and program policy to NRCS for approval in consultation with FSA.

## Uses and Restrictions

All activities under this program must work toward conservation of natural resources. All approved applicants are responsible for developing and submitting a conservation plan that will address the situation on the applicant's land relevant to the identified conservation needs or objectives that are to be addressed. A conservation plan is developed by the producer, with the assistance of NRCS or other public or private natural resource professionals, with approval by the local conservation district. The plan is used to establish an EQIP contract.

## Contact

To obtain more information on EQIP, contact the NRCS, FSA, the Cooperative Extension Service, or your local conservation district. Your local NRCS should be able to help you assess if your land is within a priority area and tell you what have been identified as state priorities for conservation activities under this program. Your local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture.

National Program Office
Anthony Esser, Program Manager
Environmental Quality Incentives Program
or
Robert Molleur, Program Manager,
Forestry Incentives Program
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013
Anthony Esser: (202) 720-1834
Robert Molleur: (202) 720-6521
Fax: (202) 720-4265
Email: anthony.esser@usda.gov
robert.molleur@usda.gov

## Internet

www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/eqipfact.html

# Farmland Protection Program

## *Provides Cooperation and Funding to Acquire Conservation Easements to Protect Prime, Unique or other Productive Soil and Limit its Conversion to Non-Agricultural Uses*

The new Farmland Protection Program provides funds to help purchase rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural use. Working through existing programs, USDA joins with state, tribal, or local governments to acquire conservation easements or other interests from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the costs of purchasing easements. (For the FPP, a conservation easement is an assigned right prohibiting any development, subdivision or practice that would damage the agricultural value or productivity of the farmland. It is legally recorded in an agreement between a landowner and a qualified organization, and restricts land to agriculture and open space use. Transactions may qualify for a tax deduction.)

The FPP was designed to help protect quality farmland in the face of urban growth. Since 1960, an average of 1.0 million acres of farmland have been converted to other uses each year, often resulting in permanent loss of valuable topsoil and agricultural land.

## Legislative Authority

Section 388 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill)

## Application and Financial Information

When funds are available, an annual notification is published in the Federal Register informing the public that applications will be accepted. If you are considering participation in the FPP, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) state conservationist.

The state conservationist may consult with the NRCS State Technical Committee and review the requests for participation by using a ranking system of USDA priorities to determine: the likelihood of conversion considering developmental pressure; zoning; utility availability and related factors; the quality of the land considering the soils; economic viability; size and product sales; and other factors including its historical, scenic and environmental qualities.

## Eligibility

To qualify, farmland must: be land with prime, unique, or other productive soil; be part of a pending offer from a state, tribe, or local farmland protection program; be privately owned; have a conservation plan; be large enough to sustain agricultural production; be accessible to markets for what the land produces; have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production. The pending offer must be for the purpose of protecting topsoil by limiting non-agricultural uses of the land.

The NRCS will not enroll land that is owned in fee title by an agency of the United States, or land that is already subject to an easement or deed restriction that limits the conversion of the land to non-agricultural use. The NRCS will not enroll otherwise eligible lands in which it determines that the protection provided by FPP would not be effective because of on-site or off-site conditions.

## Uses and Restrictions

To be selected for participation in the FPP, a pending offer must provide for the acquisition of an easement or other interests in land for a minimum duration of 30 years, with priority given to those offers providing permanent protection.

By September 30, 1998, the entire amount authorized in the 1996 Farm Bill, $35 million, has been awarded to 52 government entities in 19 states. No additional funding was available for 1999. Any future opportunities for funding will be published as a notice in the Federal Register.

## Contact

National Program Office
Farmland Protection Program Manager
Room 6013-S
USDA-NRCS
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20013
(202) 720-7671
(202) 690-0639 - fax
email: cardd@nrcs.usda.gov

## Internet

www.nrcs.usda.gov

See Features/Farm Bill/General Information

# Forestry Incentives Program (FIP)

## *Offers Cost-Sharing for Tree Planting, Timber Stand Improvements and Related Practices on Non-Industrial Private Forest Lands*

The FIP was originally authorized in 1978. Forest maintenance and reforestation activities resulting from the FIP provides numerous natural resource benefits including reduced wind and soil erosion and enhanced water quality and wildlife habitat. The FIP s cost-sharing for these measures helps eligible private landowners, whose small parcels represent the majority of the nation s forest lands.

The FIP is intended to assure the nation s ability to meet future demand for sawtimber, pulpwood and quality hardwoods by planting more trees and placing more forest land under good forest management. FIP also was designed to improve timber stands, which help to sequester greenhouse gases.

The FIP is a nationwide program available in counties designated on the basis of a Forest Service survey of total eligible private timber acreage that is potentially suitable for production of timber products. Normally the length of the program is from one to 10 years. There may be certain restrictions on time limits and on certain practices to be performed.

## Project Examples

What follows are examples of how the program has been used to address different needs:

In Vermont, a farm had crop land which extended to the banks of a river. Annual tillage operations resulted in erosion with direct runoff into the river. FIP provided an opportunity for the private landowner to convert this parcel of farmland to forest. Tree planting and necessary management practices were carried out through a cost-share arrangement whereby 65% of the costs of approved forestry practices were paid through the FIP. In addition to the cost-share benefits, the landowner also benefitted from the reduction in soil erosion and the improvement in water and air quality during the period the timber will be growing.

In Alabama the FIP is designed to address the needs of some of the state's estimated 28,000 farmers with limited financial resources who historically have had limited exposure to forestry programs. In an effort to recruit these farmers to the program, the State of Alabama offers: continuous year-round sign-up, the opportunity to sign-up on-farm through state outreach efforts, and assistance from Alabama A & M University and Tuskeegee University in locating and working with eligible farmers to develop forest management plans and train farmers for applying forestry practices on their own.

## Legislative Authority

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978.

## Application and Financial Information

Federal cost-share money is available with a limit of $10,000 per person per year and the stipulation that no more than 65 percent of the cost may be paid. To find out if your county participates in the FIP, check with your local USDA office, State Forester, conservation district, or Cooperative Extension office.

Eligible persons may apply at any time during the year at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office for the county in which the land is located. From date of application, response is generally given in 30 to 60 days. Financial assistance ranges from $50 and $10,000 per year, with an average of $1,600. Funding is limited, and priority areas for participation in the program are established at the local level.

The state forester provides technical advice in developing a forest management plan and helps find approved assistance, if needed, for completing the FIP work. In addition, the state forestry agency must certify that the project has been completed satisfactorily before cost-share payments can be made.

## Eligibility

A private individual, group, association, Native American tribe or other native group, corporation (except corporations whose stocks are publicly traded) or other legal entity which owns "non-industrial" private forest lands capable of producing industrial wood crops is eligible to apply for cost-sharing assistance. This program is available to eligible landowners in the United States or any commonwealth, territory or possession of the United States.

To be eligible for cost-share assistance under the FIP, a landowner must:

Own no more than 1,000 acres of eligible forest land;

Be a private landowner of a non-industrial forest;

Have land that is suitable for conversion from non-forest land into forest land (afforestation); for reforestation; or for improved forest management; and

Have land that is capable of producing marketable timber crops and meets minimum productivity standards established for the FIP. (At least 10 acres of eligible forest land is required for the FIP.)

## Uses and Restrictions

Available practices under FIP are:

Tree planting;

Improving a stand of forest trees; and

Site preparation for natural regeneration.

## Contact

For more information on this program, contact NRCS, Forest Service, FSA, the Cooperative Extension Service, state forestry agencies, or your local conservation district. Your local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture. Information is also available here on NRCS's World Wide Web site.

National Office
Robert T. Molleur
National FIP Manager
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013
(202) 720-6521; (202) 720-4265 - fax
robert.molleur@usda.gov

## Internet

www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/FIPfact.html

# Forest Legacy Program

## *Authorizes the USDA Forest Service to Purchase Permanent Conservation Easements on Private Forest Lands or Make Grants to Do So*

Congress created the FLP to help landowners, state and local governments, and private land trusts identify and protect environmentally important forest lands threatened by present and future conversion to non-forest uses. FLP's success depends on the private landowner who wants to conserve the special values of his or her forested land for future generations. FLP buys from the landowner at fair market value certain land use rights, such as the right to develop land, with the dual aims of promoting effective forest land management and protecting the land from conversion to non-forest uses. Priority is given to forest lands that possess important scenic, cultural, and recreation resources, fish and wildlife habitats, water resources and other ecological values.

Each state drafts a forest conservation plan identifying environmentally important forest lands that include:

- Forest buffers that stabilize soil and provide a natural filter for potential pollutants that might get into streams and rivers.
- Recreational resources such as places to swim, hike and camp.
- Fish and wildlife habitat such as clear, cold brooks for trout and dense forest cover to help deer survive cold, snowy winters.
- Sites of cultural value like unique geology, historic settlements and artifacts.
- Areas with beautiful scenery to enjoy from trails or roads.
- Areas where timber and wood fiber grow rapidly.
- Areas having other ecological value such as clean air and water.

## Project Examples

In Massachusetts, FLP provided $1.5 million to purchase a 73-acre easement on a critical tract in a 1,200-acre project to protect Estabrook Woods, an area Henry David Thoreau identified as deserving conservation.

Vermont received more than $2 million in FLP funds to purchase a 31,450-acre easement in the Northeast Kingdom region of the state. The governor supports the effort as a vehicle to protect the natural character of Vermont.

In Washington state, the Forest Service, Weyerhauser Corporation, the Trust for Public Land, and other groups have used FLP support to protect and preserve a green corridor along I-90 from Seattle through the Cascade Mountains.

## Application and Financial Information

State participation in the FLP is voluntary. To find out if FLP is operating in your state, contact your state agency that deals with forestry and natural resource issues. If that office indicates that the program is not available in your state, ask the state forester to pursue the possibility of applying for FLP support to initiate the program. States may opt for the program to be administered through the federal office or through a state agency as a state grant program.

The FLP provides federal funding for up to 75 percent of the cost of conservation easements and fee interests on forest lands that are threatened with conversion. The program requires that 25 percent of the cost of a Forest Legacy project come from non-federal sources, which may include state and local governments and nonprofit organizations. The non-federal contribution may come from matching funds or in-kind contributions and may include direct and indirect costs associated with planning, acquisition, capital improvement, management, or administrative activities. Donations of land or conservation easements to land trusts may count toward the match (if they meet specific criteria, discuss this at the time of application with your local contacts for FLP).

## Eligibility

When FLP was created in 1990, it was limited to Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York and Washington state. Today the program is potentially open to any state with threatened forest that has an Assessment of Need approved by the Forest Service. The assessment is prepared by the state forestry or natural resource agency--whichever is designated by the governor to serve as the state lead agency for FLP. Currently 22 states are active in the FLP: CA, CT, DE, HI, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, RI, UT, VT, WA, PR, NC, SC, TN, MT and MN. Other states are either developing plans for approval or considering beginning the planning process, including: AL, CO, GA, IA, NE, NM, PA, VA and WI.

For a tract of land to be eligible for an FLP easement it must: 1) be within a FLP area as defined by the state s Assessment of Need ; and 2) contain less than 10% open area. Non-forested farms and villages may be included in an FLP area if they are an integral part of the landscape and are logically within the boundaries of a Forest Legacy area, but cannot be included in the easement. Land in Indian reservations and tribal lands are also eligible.

## Uses and Restrictions

The FLP provides federal funds for:

purchase of conservation easements;

fee acquisition;

grants to states for the above activities;

surveys, title work, and other activities to facilitate donations of and or easements for FLP purposes; and

state FLP planning and administration.

Willing owners who are accepted into the program can sell all or part of their ownership rights, such as the right to develop the land, to the federal government. The government will pay for these rights at full fair market value. The owner keeps any remaining property rights and usually continues to live on and work/manage the property. Property taxes are paid by the owner on any retained rights as determined by local assessors.

Enrolled landowners are required to follow a management plan designed for their forest. Forest management activities, including timber harvesting, are allowed if consistent with the conservation easement and management plan. By law, hunting, fishing, hiking, and similar recreational uses are considered consistent with the purposes of the program.

Owners of property restricted by a conservation easement may sell to other buyers at any time. The terms and conditions of the conservation easement run with the land and are binding on the new owner. A conservation easement is a partial interest in land conveyed by deed from a landowner to an easement holder with the intent of restricting present and future owners of the property in order to achieve conservation objectives.

Land trusts, which helped conceive and enact the FLP, are encouraged to cooperate with FLP activities in states where the program is in operation. Land trusts can cooperate in the process by: helping to prepare the assessment of need, bringing landowners and other project planners into FLP agreements, helping to structure and negotiate projects, assisting in acquisition of land, helping to provide the cost-share match, monitoring easements, and participating in state grant programs.

Forest land comprising part of a large ranch has been protected by a Forest Legacy project in Utah. Other opportunities to work with farmers and ranchers should increase as farming and ranching states join the FLP. Although FLP projects are restricted to protecting forests, they can be combined with other programs and funds to conserve working landscapes. In 1994 farmers owned aobut 16% of the nation s private forests.

## Contact

For more information about FLP, contact the state agency that manages forestry issues in your state.

National Program Office
Ted Beauvais
USFS Cooperative Forestry-Forest Legacy Program
201 14th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024
(202) 205-1190
(202) 205-1271 (fax)
E-mail: tbeauvais@fs.fed.us

## Internet

www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/flp

# Partners for Fish and Wildlife

## *Provides Technical and/or Financial Assistance for Wildlife Habitat Restoration*

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (formerly named the Partners for Wildlife program) is a proactive, voluntary program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that provides technical and financial assistance to private (non-federal) landowners to voluntarily restore wetlands and other fish and wildlife habitats on their land. The program emphasizes the reestablishment of native vegetation and ecological communities for the benefit of fish and wildlife in concert with the needs and desires of private landowners. The Service also enlists the assistance of a wide variety of other partners to help restore wildlife habitat on private lands. These partners include other Federal agencies, Tribes, State and local governments, conservation organizations, academic institutions, businesses and industries, school groups, and private individuals.

Projects consist primarily of habitat restoration and enhancement, but may include habitat creation. Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Restoring wetland hydrology by plugging drainage ditches, breaking tile drainage systems, installing water control structures, dike construction, and reestablishing old connections with waterways;
- Planting native trees and shrubs in formerly forested wetlands and other habitats;
- Planting native grasslands and other vegetation;
- Installing fencing and off-stream livestock watering facilities to allow for restoration of stream and riparian areas,
- Removal of exotic plants and animals that compete with native fish and wildlife and alter their natural habitats;
- Prescribed burning as a method of removing exotic species and restoring natural disturbance regimes necessary for some species survival; and
- Reconstruction of in-stream aquatic habitat through bioengineering techniques.

A major motivation for this program is that the vast majority of existing and potential fish and wildlife habitat is on private, Tribal and other non-Federal lands. The USFWS recognizes the potential value of enlisting the active support of private landowners in restoring and maintaining wildlife habitat for future conservation efforts in the U.S.

The USFWS provides financial and technical assistance to private landowners through voluntary cooperative agreements. Under cooperative agreements, landowners agree to maintain restoration projects as specified in the agreement, but retain full control of the land. Landowners and national, state, and local organizations can serve as partners with the USFWS in carrying out restoration work on private lands.

## Project Examples

The following are a few of the thousands of restoration projects supported by the Partners for Wildlife Program since 1987:

An Illinois landowner collaborating with the USFWS and the Richardson Wildlife Foundation has returned most of 1,500 acres of agricultural land at the headwaters of the Green River to a prairie wetland complex. The USFWS provided support to survey the land and design the restoration work and financial assistance to acquire water control structures. The landowner did much of the earth work himself, installed water control structures, and planted warm season grasses to reconstruct a pre-settlement landscape. The result of the seven-year partnership is a complex of 10 wetlands totaling over 170 acres interspersed with 1,200 acres of native grass seedlings.

The Dick Creek Project in Montana enhanced 105 acres of Jones Lake, restored five wetlands totaling 74 acres and 1.5 miles of in-stream habitat, enhanced nine miles of in-stream/riparian habitat, and restored 1.5 miles of riparian habitat. The completed project provides in-stream habitat for west slope cutthroat, wetland and riparian habitat for migratory birds, and demonstrates the mutual benefit of agricultural activity coexisting with fish and wildlife conservation. Contributing partners on the project were the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; the landowners; Trout Unlimited; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Blackfoot Challenge; Ducks Unlimited; and the USFWS.

Restoration of a cottonwood-willow riparian habitat on an Arizona ranch involved USFWS support to construct interior fencing and a solar-powered pump for an alternative water source for livestock. The fencing reduced habitat destruction by livestock and the new water source enabled cattle to continue to graze upland areas around the project site. The Nature Conservancy and Arizona Fish and Game Department collaborated with the owners and the USFWS. The project is beneficial to the endangered Gila top minnow, the Huachuca water umbel (a native riparian plant) and several species of neotropical migratory birds.

## Application and Financial Information

Contact the appropriate regional office (see list below). Your regional contact should be able to give you an idea of the appropriateness of your proposed project and probability of its support by Partners for Fish and Wildlife. The program aims for a 50% non-federal match for each project. Landowners and partner organizations provide this matching support.

## Eligibility

Any private landowner owning lands that have potential for restoration to its original habitat can apply for consideration in this program.

## Uses and Restrictions

Landowners voluntarily offer the land base for restoration for a fixed term (at least 10 years although many extend the term). The program emphasizes the restoration of formerly degraded wetlands, native grasslands, riparian areas, and other habitats to conditions as close to natural as is feasible.

## Contact

Region 1 (WA, OR, ID, CA, NV, HI)
Coordinator: Marilyn Friley
911 North East 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232-4181
(503) 231-2047

Region 2 (AZ, NM, TX, OK)
Coordinator: Mike McCollum
711 Stadium Drive E; Suite 252
Arlington, TX 76011
(817) 277-1100

Region 3 (MN, IO, MO, WI, IL, IN, MI, OH)
Coordinator: Greg Brown
1 Federal Drive, Federal Building
Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4056
(612) 713-5475

Region 4 (LA, AR, MS, AL, GA, FL, SC, NC, KY, TN)
Coordinator: Ronnie Haynes
1875 Century Blvd
Atlanta, GA 30345
(404) 679-7138

Region 5 (ME, NH, VT, CN, MA, DE, RI, NY, PA, MD, VA, WV, NJ)
Coordinator: Steve Hill
300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadly, MA 01035-9589
(413) 253-8614

Region 6 (ND, SD, NE, KS, MT, WY, UT, CO)
Coordinator: Rick Dornfeld
134 Union Blvd, POB 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, CO 80225
(303) 236-7400, ext. 241

Region 7 (AK)
Coordinator: Michael Roy
1011 East Tudor Road
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 786-3925; (907) 786-3350 - fax

National Program Office
Martha Naley
Chief, Branch of Habitat Restoration
4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 400
Arlington, VA 22203
(703) 358-2201; (703) 358-1869 - fax

## Internet

partners.fws.gov/

# Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

## *Restores and Protects Wetlands on Private Property, Providing Financial Incentives to Enhance Wetlands in Exchange for Retiring Agricultural Land*

The WRP helps farmers and other landowners take agricultural lands out of production and restore them as wetlands. The program is administered by USDA s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with assistance from the State Technical Committees. The NRCS provides technical information about restoring wetlands and financial assistance for conservation measures.

There are three enrollment options: a permanent easement, a 30-year easement, or a restoration agreement. Under all three options, the landowner retains ownership of the land; remains responsible for taxes; controls access; and reserves the right to hunt, fish, trap and pursue other appropriate recreational usese; and may sell or lease land enrolled in WRP. Other uses may be permitted providing NRCS determines the use is compatible with the restoration and protection of the wetland.

If NRCS approves your offer for a:

permanent easement, the government will provide an easement payment based on the lesser of the appraised value of the land, a geographic rate cap, or an amount offered by the landowner. The government will pay 100 percent of the restoration costs and the administrative costs associated with filing the easement (survey costs, legal fees, recording fees, etc.).

30-year easement, the government will provide an easement payment that is 75 percent of the amount that would have been made for a permanent easement, up to 75 percent of the restoration costs and all of the administrative costs associated with filing the easement.

10-year restoration agreement, the government will provide up to 75 percent of the restoration costs.

## Project Examples

Examples of situations appropriate for the WRP include:

On the Mississippi delta floodplain in Louisiana, one farmer cultivated rice in a zone of ridge and swale topography with heavy clay soil. The drainage to the Mississippi river had been blocked and water often backed up, flooding the field, resulting in no harvest or inability to even plant during some wet years. The WRP agreement was to restore the hydrology of 640 acres by installing small dikes and outlets at the swales creating shallow water areas. Planting of bottom land hardwoods along the ridges further improved the land for wildlife habitat. A permanent easement paid the farmer a one-time fee of $500/acre, covered 100 percent of the restoration costs, and still enabled him to hold title to the land. The farmer now rents out duck blinds to hunters for $2,000-4,000 each season.

In the previous example, if the landowner chose a 30-year easement, the same deed arrangement would be made, but just for the 30 years rather than as a permanent easement. WRP would have paid 75 percent of the restoration costs and 75 percent of the agricultural value of the land to the landowner.

A dairy farmer in northern New England had continuous problems with a 30-acre hayfield within the floodplain of an adjacent river. Despite extensive ditching and other attempts to remove the water, some years the land was too wet to plow. The farmer opted for a permanent easement in the WRP to restore the 30 acres to wetland. He received a one-time payment of $500/acre, the costs of ditch plugging were reimbursed, and he now has the multiple benefits of a one-acre shallow pond which attracts migratory waterfowl and other wildlife to his property.

## Legislative Authority

Food Security Act of 1985, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

To participate in the WRP, visit the local NRCS office, sign an intent to participate, and select one of the three contract options. (See Overview above).

Landowners work with NRCS personnel to draw up a preliminary plan or Wetland Restoration Plan of Operations (WRPO), which describes the types of practices to be established, a timetable for establishing practices, and the estimated costs of restoration.

The amount of taxes to be paid on the easement area is determined by the local taxing authority; NRCS has no authority regarding property or other tax issues. You should seek this information before entering the WRP.

## Eligibility

To be eligible for the program, a landowner must have a clear title and own the land for at least 12 months before the end of the sign-up period (except in the case of inheritance). The land must be restorable to wetland conditions. Eligible lands include wetlands farmed under natural conditions, farmed wetlands, prior converted cropland, commenced converted wetlands, farmed wetland pasture, or land substantially altered by flooding. Your local NRCS office can help you decide if your land is eligible.

## Uses and Restrictions

The landowner continues to control access to the land--and may lease the land for hunting, fishing, and other undeveloped recreational activities. At any time, a landowner may request additional activities be evaluated to determine if they are compatible uses for the site. This request may include such items as permission to cut hay, graze livestock or harvest wood products. Compatible uses are allowed if they are fully consistent with the protection and enhancement of the wetland.

## Contact

For more information on restoring wetlands, contact a local USDA Service Center, Cooperative Extension, or the soil and water conservation district office.

National Program Office
Robert Misso
Wetlands Reserve Program
6014 South Building
Washington, D.C.
(202) 690-0848
(202) 690-1462 (fax)

## Internet

www.wl.fb-net.org/

# Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

### *Offers Cost-Sharing and Technical Assistance to Improve Wildlife Habitat*

The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is designed to help landowners and those who are in control of acreage develop and preserve important wildlife habitat for future generations. The program offers technical assistance and cost-sharing opportunities for developing a wildlife habitat devlopment plan and for managing the land in accordance with that plan.

USDA s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works with state and local partners to establish wildlife habitat priorities in each state. NRCS will provide cost-share payments up to 75 percent of the cost of installing wildlife habitat development practices on the land. Generally, the total cost-share amount cannot exceed $10,000 per agreement. Agreements are for a five- to 10-year period.

## Project Examples

Each state has established several wildlife priorities, including one or more upland and riparian habitats. Nationally, acres have been distributed among four major habitat types:

- *Upland Wildlife Habitat* Several types of early successional grasslands, such as tall grass prairies, have declined more than 98 percent according to a 1995 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Report. One of the primary focuses of WHIP nationally is restoration of some of these now scarce areas. Wildlife dependent on native grasslands includes neotropical migratory birds, waterfowl, amphibians, reptiles and many mammals. Other upland priorities include the establishment of windbreaks and edge around croplands, forests including pine barrens and long leaf pine, wildlife corridors, and shrub scrub steppe habitat. Practices installed on upland habitat include: various types of seeding and plantings, fencing, livestock management, prescribed burning, shrub thickets with shelterbelts.
- *Wetland Wildlife Habitat* WHIP wetland acres include acreage that is not eligible for the NRCS Wetland Reserve Program cost-share agreements such as winter flooding of crop fields for waterfowl. Other wetland types that will be enhanced include tidal flushing areas, salt marshes, wetland hardwood hammocks, mangrove forests, and wild rice beds. Created wetlands include freshwater marshes and vernal pools in abandoned gravel mines. Practices to enhance or create wetland wildlife habitat include: installation of culverts or water control structures, invasive plant control, fencing, creation of greentree reservoirs, moist soil unit management, and creation of shallow water areas.
- *Riparian and Instream Aquatic Wildlife Habitat* This category includes riparian areas along streams, rivers, lakes, sloughs and coastal areas, as well as the streams, lakes, and rivers themselves. Practices to improve aquatic and riparian wildlife habitat include: tree plantings, fencing with livestock management and off-stream watering, in-stream structures, seeding, streambank protection and stabilization, stream deflectors, creation of small pools, installation of buffers, removal of dams, fencing, creation of fish passages past structures, alternative watering facilities, and establishment of instream structures such as logs or rocks.
- *Threatened and Endangered Species* Threatened and endangered species targeted through WHIP include, but are not limited to the following: American burying beetle, Neosho madtom, Topeka shiner, gray bat, kit fox, bog turtle, gopher tortoise, dusky-gopher frog, Eastern indigo snake, Southern hognose snake, black pine snake, Louisiana black bear, red-cockaded woodpecker, Mississippi sandhill crane, Florida panther, wood stork, snail kite, Florida sandhill crane, caracara, grasshopper sparrow, Snake River chinook salmon, Umpua River cutthroat trout, coho salmon, steelhead, bulltrout, Lahontan cutthroat trout, Yuma clapper rails, Sonoran pronghorn, Mexican voles, and lesser long-nosed bats.

## Legislative Authority

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill).

## Application and Financial Information

WHIP applications will be accepted at local USDA Service Centers or conservation district offices. They may also be accepted by cooperating conservation partners approved or designated by NRCS.

Participants work with NRCS to prepare a wildlife habitat development plan in consultation with the local conservation district. The agreement describes the landowner's goals for improving wildlife habitat, includes a list of practices and schedule for installing them, and details the steps necessary to maintain the habitat for the life of the agreement.

NRCS and the participant enter into a cost-share agreement for wildlife habitat development. This agreement generally lasts five to 10 years from the date the contract is signed. Under the agreement:

> The landowner agrees to maintain the cost-shared practices and allow NRCS or its agent access to monitor its effectiveness.
>
> NRCS agrees to provide technical assistance and pay up to 75 percent of the cost of installing the wildlife habitat practices. Additional financial or technical assistance may be available through cooperating partners.

Applications will be ranked according to a state-developed plan, and those that provide the greatest wildlife benefits will be funded. The goal is to provide the best habitat possible for the species of fish and wildlife which the landowner or land steward is trying to protect. Cost-share payments may be used to establish, maintain, or replace practices.

The budget for WHIP is authorized at a total of $50 million from 1997-2002. Funds are allocated to states based on wildlife conservation priorities which will vary by state, and may include: special pilot programs for wildlife habitat development, targeted species and their habitats, specific practices, and cooperate agreements with other federal, state, or local agencies, conservation districts, or private conservation groups.

## Eligibility

To participate in WHIP, applicants must own or have control of the land under consideration. Applications may be accepted from individuals, groups, or businesses.

Land is not eligible for WHIP if it is currently: 1) federal land (though exceptions can apply); 2) land currently enrolled in Waterbank, Emergency Watershed Program floodplain easements, Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, or other similar programs; 3) land where the expected impact from off-site conditions make the success of habitat improvement unlikely.

WHIP funds cannot be used for mitigation of any kind. Such land can be included in a WHIP cost-share agreement, however cost-share funds cannot be expended on those acres.

## Uses and Restrictions

Applicants develop a wildlife habitat development plan for the land with assistance from the local conservation district and the USDA. Participants are encouraged to select native plants and native plant communities because these are well adapted to the area, less invasive, and likely to provide quality habitat without costly maintenance expenses.

WHIP funds are to be directed to support state wildlife habitat priorities which may include: wildlife habitat areas; targeted species and their habitats; specific practices; and cooperative agreements with other federal, state, or local agencies, conservation districts, or private conservation groups. State priorities are developed in consultation with the State Technical Committee.

## Contact

For additional information on WHIP, contact the NRCS through your local USDA Service Center, or your local conservation district office.

National Program Office
Bob Misso
National Policy Coordinator
Watersheds and Wetlands Division
Natural Resources Conservation Service
(202) 720-3534; (202) 720-2143 - fax

## Internet

wl.fb-net.org/whip/

# Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)

***Technical and cost sharing assistance to reduce threats to life and property in the wake of natural disasters. Assistance includes establishing vegetative cover, gully control, stream bank protection, debris removal, and levee stabilization.***

The Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program helps protect lives and property threatened by natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, and wildfires. The program is administered by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which provides technical and financial assistance to preserve life and property threatened by excessive erosion and flooding.

EWP provides funding to project sponsors for such work as clearing debris from clogged waterways, restoring vegetation, and stabilizing riverbanks. The measures that are implemented must be environmentally and economically sound and generally benefit more than one property owner.

The Floodplain Easement Option an option on agricultural land and authorized in the 1996 Farm Bill gives producers the opportunity to offer their land for a floodplain easement. The easements provide permanent restoration of the natural floodplain hydrology as an alternative to traditional attempts to restore damaged levees, lands, and structures. The easement lands would be ineligible for future Federal disaster assistance.

## Project Examples

EWP assistance has been employed for:

- Protection of rural roads threatened by stream bank erosion;
- Reestablishing stream channels which altered course due to debris accumulation;
- Purchase of floodplain easements on cropland frequently damaged by floodwaters.

## Legislative Authority

The United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is responsible for administering the program. Authorization for federal assistance through the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program stems from Section 216, Public Law 81-516, Section 403 of Title VI of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978, Public Law 95-334, and Section 382, Title III of the 1996 Farm Bill.

## Application and Financial Information

The purpose of EWP is to help people recover from natural disasters where there are imminent threats to life and property as the result of an impairment to the watershed. EWP is not an individual assistance program. All projects undertaken must be sponsored by a political subdivision of the State, such as a city, county, general improvement district, or conservation district. The sponsor's application should be in the form of a letter signed by an official of the sponsoring organization. The letter should include information on the nature, location, and scope of the problem for which assistance is requested.

Information is available from NRCS offices to explain the eligibility requirements for the EWP program. Send applications for assistance to the local NRCS field office or the NRCS state office. Through the EWP Program, NRCS provides up to 75 percent of the funds needed to restore the natural function of a watershed. The community or local sponsor of the work pays the remaining 25 percent, which can be provided by cash or in-kind services.

## Eligibility

Owners, managers, and users of public, private, or tribal lands are eligible for EWP assistance if their watershed area has been damaged by a natural disaster. However, each EWP project, with the exception of floodplain easements, requires a sponsor who applies for the assistance. A sponsor can be any legal subdivision of State or local government, including local officials of city, county, or State governments, Indian tribes, soil conservation districts, U.S. Forest Service, and watershed authorities. They determine priorities for emergency assistance while coordinating work with other Federal and local agencies. Sponsors are needed to provide legal authority to do repair work, obtain necessary permits, contribute funds or in-kind services, and maintain the completed emergency measures.

## Uses and Restrictions

All EWP work must reduce threats to life and property. Furthermore, it must be economically and environmentally defensible and sound from a technical standpoint. All work must represent the least expensive alternative. EWP funds cannot be used to solve problems that existed before the disaster. EWP cannot improve the level of protection above that which existed prior to the disaster. EWP cannot fund operation and maintenance work, or repair private or public transportation facilities or utilities. EWP work cannot adversely affect downstream water rights, and EWP funds cannot be used to install measures not essential to the reduction of hazards. In addition, EWP funds cannot be used to perform work on measures installed by another federal agency.

## Contact

National EWP Program Leader
USDA/NRCS
Room 6012-S
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013-2890
(202) 720-3534

## Internet

www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/CCS/ewpFs.html
www.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/programs.html

# Environmental Finance Program

***The Environmental Finance Program at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides financial technical assistance to the regulated community and advice and recommendations to the Agency on environmental finance issues, trends, and options.***

Drawing on the financing expertise of staff, the Environmental Financial Advisory Board, and university based Environmental Finance Centers, the Environmental Finance Program seeks to lower costs, increase investment, and build capacity by creating partnerships with state and local governments and the private sector to fund environmental needs.

The Environmental Finance Program operates through three activities:

1. The Environmental Financial Advisory Board or EFAB is a federally chartered advisory committee consisting of a diverse group of independent financing experts from public and private sector organizations interested in lowering environmental costs and increasing investment in environmental facilities and services. The Board produces policy and technical reports on a wide range of environmental finance matters of interest to EPA. It focuses on environmental finance issues at all levels of government, particularly with regard to their impact on local governments and small communities. The Board seeks to increase the total investment in environmental protection by facilitating greater leverage of public and private environmental resources.

2. The Environmental Finance Center (EFC) Network is a university-based program providing financial outreach services to regulated communities. The Network consists of six EFCs that share information and expertise on finance issues and engage jointly in projects. The Network includes (in order of their establishment): the University of New Mexico in Region 6; the University of Maryland in Region 3, Syracuse University in Region 2; California State University at Hayward in Region 9; the Great Lakes EFC at Cleveland State University in Region 5; and Boise State University in Idaho located in Region 10. The EFCs educate state and local officials and small businesses on lowering costs of compliance and pollution prevention, increasing investments in environmental protection, improving financial capacity to own/ operate environmental systems, encouraging the full cost pricing of environmental services, and identifying and evaluating financing tools and options.

3. The Environmental Financing Information Network (EFIN) is an outreach service offering electronic access to many types of environmental financing information on financing alternatives for State and local environmental programs and projects. EFIN services include a World Wide Web site, an on-line database, referrals to an expert contact network, infoline, and distribution of Environmental Finance Program publications and some EPA publications.

## Information Available

EFIN maintains a Web page of environmental financial tools at www.epa.gov/efinpage/. This page includes tools produced by the Environmental Finance Program, the EFAB, the EFCs, EFIN, EPA offices and programs and other (outside EPA) sources. A key work among the financing mechanisms on this page is the Guidebook of Financial Tools. The Guidebook is produced by the EFCs and the EFAB. It is intended as a basic financial reference document for public and private officials with environmental responsibilities. It provides a wealth of valuable information on 340 financing tools that federal, state, and local governments and the private sector can use to pay for environmental programs, systems, and activities.

The information is intended to help governments and other parties expand their thinking about the financial options/resources available to help meet important environmental mandates and create sustainable systems. To go straight to the Guidebook on the web, go to www.epa.gov/efinpage/ guidbk98/index.htm

Additional publications include:

*Financing Models for Environmental Protection: Helping Communites Meet Their Environmental Goals*, September 1992, EPA202B92006

*Narrowing the Gap: Environmental Finance for the 1990 s. A Progress Report of the Environmental Financial Advisory Board*, May 1992, EPA205R92002

*Solid Waste Contract Negotiation Handbook*, May 1992, EPA220B92004

*Solid Waste Contracting: Questions and Answers*, May 1992, EPA220B92005

*Public-Private Partnerships for Environmental Facilities: a Self-Help Guide for Local Governments*, July 1991, EPA20M-2003

*Public-Private Partnerships Case Studies: Profiles of Success in Providing Environmental Services*, September 1990, EPA20M-2005

*Public/Private Partnerships Save Cities Millions*, August 1990, EPA830F90001

To request any of these publications, contact the Internet Librarian at efin@epa.gov. Alternatively, contact the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP), via the EPA web site or call (800) 490-9198. Use the order numbers given with the publications.

## Contact

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Comptroller
Environmental Finance Program (Mail Code) 2731R
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C 20460
E-mail: efin@epa.gov

For questions pertaining to the Environmental Financing Information Network (EFIN) and for other reference requests concerning sources of funding, contact the Internet Librarian (GCI Information Services) at efin@epa.gov or (202) 564-4994, FAX: (202) 565-2587

For specific questions concerning the Environmental Finance Program s components, please contact the following staff:

**Environmental Financial Advisory Board (EFAB)**

Vanessa Bowie
bowie.vanessa@epa.gov

Alternate: George Ames
ames.george@epa.gov

**The Guidebook of Financial Tools**

Timothy McProuty
mcprouty.timothy@epa.gov

**Environmental Finance Center Network**

Vera Hannigan
hannigan.vera@epa.gov

Alternate: George Ames
ames.george@epa.gov

## Internet

www.epa.gov/efinpage/efpcon.htm

# VI. Community Development

Also see:

Rural Business Enterprise Grants
Rural Business Opportunity Grants
Small Farmers Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program
Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program

# Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

## *Offers Grants to Agencies and Organizations in a 13-State Area for Projects that Promote Economic and Social Development*

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) was established by Congress in 1965 to support economic and social development in the Appalachian Region. Each year, Congress appropriates funds, which ARC distributes among its member states. The Appalachian governors submit to ARC their priorities and spending plans for the year, which include lists of projects they recommend for funding. The spending plans are reviewed and approved at a meeting of the 14 Commission members, the governors of the 13 Appalachian states and a federal co-chairman. Citizens participate as members of local development districts and multi-county agencies with boards made up of elected officials, businesspeople and members of organizations.

ARC programs are divided into two areas: a highway program, which focuses on the construction of a 3,025-mile highway system; and a community and human development program, which seeks to create sustained local economic growth. An integral part of ARC's mission is to build partnerships and forge alliances for regional collaboration among the 406 counties that ARC serves.

Each year ARC awards grants that address a variety of needs in the 13-state Appalachian Region such as reducing school dropout rates, providing job training, building water and sewer systems, developing telecommunications networks, training emerging community leaders, helping start and expand new businesses, and making health and dental care more accessible.

Each state sets its own priorities for use of ARC development funds, so agriculture and forest projects must be on your state's agenda to warrant support from ARC. ARC has supported projects aimed at agriculture and forest production, but such projects represent a small proportion of total projects funded.

In 1996 ARC adopted a new strategic plan that sets specific goals for ARC programs in five key areas: education, physical infrastucture, community capacity building, local economic development and health care. ARC requires that each area development grant address one of these five goals.

ARC sets aside a significant amount of funding each year for use in economically distressed counties, which account for about one fourth of the 406 counties in the Appalachian Region, and ARC provides administrative support for 71 local development districts, which work with local citizens to determine local needs and priorities. In addition, ARC recently launched a $15 million entrepreneurship initiative to help start and expand more homegrown businesses in Appalachia.

## Project Examples

Examples of projects funded by ARC include the following:

Rural Johnson County High School in Tennessee received ARC and corporate grants to create an Aquacenter in the school's Alternative Farming Center. The $500,000 grant sought to offer an alternative to tobacco as a major cash crop for young producers in the region. Students learned to raise tilapia, striped bass, and crappie along with lettuce, tomatoes, and other produce in the school's greenhouse as part of the district's vocational education program.

ARC granted $200,000 to Pennsylvania's Hardwood Development Council, a 21-member board dedicated to adding value to lumber products and increasing jobs in the state's forest industry. The grant paid for workshops to help wood manufacturers: 1) identify new markets for wood products; 2) pay for a market analysis of the state's hardwood industry; 3) analyze skills required for secondary processing jobs and the state's ability to provide training for those jobs; and 4) develop a comprehensive listing of existing logger training programs.

An ARC grant to the Kentucky International Trade Office was aimed at supporting a program to help small and medium-sized businesses conduct international trade. The program sought to ensure that businesses have the information they need to take advantage of trade opportunities. Assistance included workshops, seminars, training, market identification and research, financing assistance, and development of industry consortia.

## Eligibility

ARC program funds may be used only for projects to be carried out within the 406 counties in the 13 states designated by Congress as part of the Appalachian Region. The Appalachian Region encompasses 200,000-square-miles along the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. The region includes all of West Virginia and parts of twelve other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

All grant requests must originate from the states and be approved initially by a state s governor. ARC program grants can be awarded to state or local agencies and governmental bodies (such as economic development authorities), local governing boards (such as county councils), and nonprofit organizations (such as schools or non-governmental organizations). Program grants are not made to individuals or to private, for-profit corporations.

## Uses and Restrictions

Because states originate all ARC program grants, a potential applicant must apply to the program manager in his or her state. Potential applicants should also contact the local development district serving his or her county for guidance on a project's eligibility for funding and for assistance in preparing a grant application. Applicants should note that a majority of ARC funding is dedicated to providing basic infrastructure for rural communities and settlements.

## Contact

To initiate the application process you should contact the ARC program manager in your state. You should also approach the local development district serving your county for guidance on your project s eligibility for funding. Program managers are listed on ARC s web site at www.arc.gov.

National Program Office
Judy Rae, Director
Program Operations Division
Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Suite 700
Washington, DC 20235
(202) 884-7760; (202) 884-7682 - fax
E-mail: jrea@arc.gov

## Internet

www.arc.gov/

# Community Facilities Loan Program

## *Financial Assistance for Community Facilities in Rural Areas in the Form of Low-Interest Direct and Guaranteed Loans*

The Community Facilities Loan Program provides below-market interest rate direct and guaranteed loans for the development, construction, enlargement, improvement, and operation of essential community facilities for public use in rural areas. Examples that relate to agriculture are: county fairgrounds, food preparation centers, agriculture land for research centers, slaughter houses, sprinkler systems, etc.

Direct and guaranteed loans are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, Indian tribes, and nonprofit corporations. The guaranteed loans work similarly to the Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program of the Rural Business Service/Rural Development. The Rural Housing Service (RHS) guarantees loans by local banks and other commercial lenders against a portion (up to a maximum of 90 percent) of loss resulting from borrower default.

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## Project Examples

The renovation of an existing agriculture fairground facility was funded in Minnesota with for showing livestock and grain, training in new farming and homemaking techniques, meeting other farm families, and enjoy family-oriented entertainment.

The construction of a conference/training center with lodging facilities was funded in West Virginia with a direct loan of $2.5 million. This facility is used by Future Farmers of America and Future Homemakers of America for continuing education. This loan allowed for the offering of more modern guest rooms than were available, as well as providing more services more groups.

A new agriculture fairground (40,000 square feet) was funded in Covington County, Alabama, with an initial direct loan of $400,000 and a subsequent loan of $100,000 for additional costs that were incurred after start of construction.

The purchase of agriculture land for a research center was funded in Cottle County, Texas, for $30,780.

A sprinkler system was funded in Jefferson County, Ore., with a direct loan of $120,000.

## Application and Financial Information

The state or district office of USDA's Rural Development agency makes the loan directly to the applicant. The state office generally has loan approval authority. Applications are available throughout the year and are accepted on an ongoing basis. Eligibility is determined within 60 days, and approval determinations are made by the end of that fiscal year. Pre-application reviews and advice also are available through state offices.

There is no designated maximum Community Funds Loan amount, although each state may set such limits based on their allocations. However, the maximum term on all loans is 40 years. No repayment period will exceed any statutory limitation on the organization's borrowing authority nor the useful life of the improvement or the facility. All loans will be secured to adequately protect the interest of the government. Bonds or notes pledging taxes, assessments, or revenues will be accepted as security if they meet statutory requirements. A mortgage may be taken on real and personal property when state laws permit. Interest rates will be set periodically and will be based on current market yields for municipal obligations, except that some loans which involve the use of prime or unique farmland may require a slightly higher interest rate. Other loans may be made at a lower interest rate. Interest rates for direct loans for October through December 1999 ranged from a poverty rate of 4.5 percent to an intermediate rate of 5.0 percent to a market rate of 5.5 percent, depending on financial need. Interest rates change quarterly.

## Eligibility

Loans and grants are available for public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special purpose districts. Nonprofit corporations and Indian tribes also may receive loans or grants assistance when adequate plans for debt repayment and operation of the facility are made.

To be an eligible loan or grant purpose under the Community Facilities Program, an essential community facility should meet all of the following criteria:

Be a function customarily provided by a local unit of government.

Be a public improvement needed for the orderly development of a rural community.

Not include private affairs or commercial or business undertakings (except for a limited authority for industrial parks).

Be the area of jurisdiction or operation for the public bodies eligible to receive assistance or a similar local rural service area of a nonprofit corporation owning and operating an essential community facility.

A community may be a small city or town, county, or possibly multi-county body, depending on the type of essential community facility.

## Uses and Restrictions

Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program funds may be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and public services, including community buildings, child care centers, courthouses, public maintenance buildings, libraries, schools industrial parks, roads, bridges, airports, fairgrounds, utilities, and other improvements or to acquire interest in land, leases, and right of ways necessary to develop the facilities. Loan funds may also be used for the operation of these facilities. Funds may also be used for multiservice centers and to pay necessary costs connected with these facilities. The project must be based on taxes, assessments, revenues, fees, or other satisfactory sources of money sufficient for operation, maintenance, and reserve, as well as retire the debt. The project also must be consistent with available comprehensive and other development plans for the community, and comply with federal, state, and local laws.

## Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA's Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the Community Facilities Loan Program (along with other business and community programs) to potential borrowers and lenders. For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development office or any Rural Development field office. These offices can also provide contact information for local banks and lending institutions that have experience with the program. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office
Chief of Direct Loan Processing
Rural Housing Service
1400 Independence Ave
Stop 3222
Washington DC, 20250-0730
(202) 720-1497; (202) 690-0471 - fax
Email: cparker@rdmail.rural.usda.gov

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rhs/cf/cf.htm

# Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program

## *Grants to Develop Community Food Projects for Low-Income Residents*

This new program supports the development of community food projects designed to meet the food needs of low-income people; increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own needs; and promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues.

Other objectives of the program are to: 1) develop linkages between two or more sectors of the food system; 2) support the development of entrepreneurial projects; 3) develop innovative linkages between the for-profit and nonprofit food sectors; and 4) encourage long-term planning activities and multi-system, inter-agency collaboration.

A match of 50 percent non-federal support of the project is required during the term of the grant. The non-federal share may be provided through payment in cash or in-kind contributions in the form of fairly evaluated facilities, equipment, or services. The non-federal share may be derived from state or local governments, or from private sources.

## Project Examples

Among the projects funded since 1996 were:

In its first year, the Garden City Harvest Project initiated by ***Missoula Nutrition Resources in Missoula, Montana***, put six acres of undeveloped land into production for gardens and community supported agriculture (CSA) projects that helped supply food to 165 households and 57,000 pounds of produce to low-income families and emergency feeding organizations. The project also implemented an ecological agriculture program for 50 University of Montana students.

CFP funding for the ***Rural Development Center in Salinas, California***, aided more than 100 farmers with training and technical support, permitted 30 families to begin gardening, helped start a farmers market serving farmworker households, brought 100 households into a community supported agriculture project, involved 90 students in a school gardening effort, and established a broadly representative Food Policy Council.

Nearly two dozen low-income families received fresh produce through a subsidized community supported agriculture (CSA) effort operated by the ***Practical Farmers of Iowa in Boone, Iowa***. In addition, with CFP support, the project initiated a farmers market in downtown Ames, helped producers broker All Iowa Grown meals at hotels and conference centers, offered nutrition education and community gardening opportunities for children and adults, and organized a local food system conference that has become and annual event.

A total of 85 youth received instruction in organic production, composting, planting, and insect identification as part of the ***Youth Farm and Market Project in St. Paul, Minnesota***. The training for urban farming, along with visits to a rural Farm Camp, helped youth gain experience in marketing produce from local farmers through public schools, a restaurant, and a delicatessen. Youth also took home fresh produce to increase consumption of organic vegetables, receiving cooking lessons from a professional chef on how to use them.

## Legislative Authority

Section 401 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996

## Application and Financial Information

Each year the Community Food Projects program guidelines are published in the Federal Register. The program also maintains a mailing list of people who receive a copy of the Request for Proposals when it is available each year. You may ask to be placed on this mailing list by calling (202) 401-5048 or sending an e-mail message to: psu@reeusda.gov

All proposal guidelines and submission deadlines are outlined in the Request for Proposals. Formal proposals are submitted to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) of USDA. Grant awards are announced within 90 to 180 days from the deadline for submission of proposals.

Proposals are reviewed by CSREES staff members with the assistance and advice of peer specialists and are evaluated on the basis of multiple criteria including: 1) the ability of the proposed project to facilitate low-income people in the proposed community to provide for their own food needs; 2) the ability to promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition needs; 3) the capacity for the project to become self-sus-taining once federal funding ends; 4) the organizational and staff qualifications and experience of the sponsoring organization; and 5) the extent to which the proposed project contributes to: a) developing linkages between two or more sectors of the food system; b) supporting the development of entrepreneurial projects; c) developing innovative linkages between the for-profit and nonprofit food sectors; d) encouraging long-term planning activities and multi-system, interagency approaches; and e) incorporating linkages to one or more ongoing USDA themes or initiatives referred to in the program guidelines and/or annual proposal solicitation.

Proposals also must indicate that projects have the dollar-for-dollar match from non-federal sources that is required for this program.

Projects may be funded for one to three years. Past grants have ranged from $10,000 to $250,000. No information on average amounts of grants is available.

In fiscal year 1996, the Community Food Project Competitive Grants Program received $1 million for start-up. The next two years have been funded at $2.5 million.

## Eligibility

Proposals may be submitted by private nonprofit entities for projects which benefit low-income people. Because projects must promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues, applicants are encouraged to seek and create partnership among public, private nonprofit and private for-profit organizations or firms.

To be further eligible for a grant, a private nonprofit applicant must meet three mandatory requirements: 1) Have experience in the area of: a) community food work, particularly concerning small and medium-sized farms, including the provision of food to people in low-income communities and the development of new markets in low-income communities for agricultural producers; or b) job training and business development activities in low-income communities; 2) Demonstrate competency to implement a project, provide fiscal accountability and oversight, collect data, and prepare reports and other appropriate documentation; and 3) Demonstrate a willingness to share information with researchers, practitioners, and other interested parties.

## Uses and Restrictions

Community food projects are intended to take a comprehensive approach to developing long-term solutions that help to ensure food security in communities by linking the food sector to community development, economic opportunity, and environmental enhancement. Comprehensive solutions may include elements such as: 1) Improved access to high quality, affordable food among low-income households; 2) Support for local food systems, from urban gardening to local farms that provide high quality fresh food, ideally with minimal adverse environmental impact; and 3) Expanded economic opportunities for community residents through local business or other economic development, improved employment opportunities, job training, youth apprenticeship, school-to-work transition, and the like. Any solution proposed must address community food needs.

## Contact

National Program Office
Dr. Mark R. Bailey, (202) 401-6488 &
Dr. Elizabeth Tuckermanty, (202) 205-0241

Program Co-Directors
USDA-CSREES, Stop 2241
Washington, DC 20250-2241
E-mail: mbailey@reeusda.gov
etuckermanty@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov/crgam/cfp/community.htm

# The Forest Service's Economic Recovery Program

***Provides Technical and Financial Assistance, Training and Education Assistance to Build Capacity and Diversify the Economies of Rural Communities Dependent upon Forest Resources***

The Forest Service s Economic Recovery program provides technical and financial assistance, training, and education to rural communities faced with acute economic problems associated with federal or private sector resource management decisions and policies. Aid is targeted to communities that are located in or near a national forest system lands and are economically dependent upon forest resources (including timber, forage, recreation, tourism and mining). Economic Recovery is intended to help communities develop strategic action plans to build community capacity and to diversify their economic base and to improve the economic, social, and environmental well being of rural areas. Specific actions focus on organizing, planning, and implementing projects contained in local action plans. Funds can also be used for seed money, feasibility studies and business plan development.

Economic Recovery is a program component of Rural Community Assistance (RCA), a core Forest Service effort since 1990. RCA, which includes Economic Recovery and Rural Development, is a broad-based effort aimed at helping rural communities capitalize on their potential to diversify and expand their economies through the use of natural resources, emphasize working through partnerships while developing long-term sustainable solutions to problems through local, community-based planning and action.

## Project Examples

Since the initiation of the Economic Recovery Program, direct assistance has grown from helping 185 eligible communities in fiscal year 1992 to over 2500 in fiscal year 1999. Many of the local action plans include activities related to tourism, expanding or creating businesses, marketing, special forest products, or building community capacity through organizational development and training/education projects.

Developing and implementing an ecosystem management plan which includes commercial opportunities for utilizing small diameter, second-growth pine in Montezuma, Dolores, and La Plata counties in southwestern Colorado.

Establishment of the Forest Technology and Training Institute in Clallum County, Washington which teaches cutting edge forest technology to local loggers and businesses.

Creation of a new saddlemaking enterprise that produces competitively-priced, high-quality, custom and general saddlery products with unique, traditional Navajo designs, through assistance from the Cibola National Forest to the Ramah Chapter of the Navajo Nation, New Mexico.

Training and placing out-of-work loggers into environmental restoration jobs within a Ceremonial District of the Karouk Tribe near the communities of Somes Bar and Orleans, California.

## Legislative Authority

National Forest Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act of 1990, sec. 2371 Subtitle G, Chapter 2, Title XXIII, Public Law 101-624, 7U.S.C. 6611, as amended

## Application and Financial Information

Assistance is available from the National Forest Supervisor's offices and field offices of the Northeastern Area of the State and Private Forestry branch of the Forest Service to aid in the preparation of applications. Communities are requested to submit form SF-424(A) with the SF-424 application and other required forms as advised by the local Forest Service office. Funding decisions are based on community and regional priorities and are made in consultation with other state and local agencies and organizations.

Average grants range from $5,000 to $30,000. The federal contribution to the overall implementation of an action plan cannot exceed 80 percent of the total cost of the plan, including administrative and other costs. In fiscal year 1999, $3.95 million was available for financial and technical assistance.

## Eligibility

Applicant must be a general purpose local government or area represented by a nonprofit corporation or institution under state or federal law to promote broad based economic development having a population of not more than 10,000; or any county that is not contained within a metropolitan statistical area. In both cases, the county must derive 15 percent or greater primary and secondary labor and proprietary income from forestry and forest related industries, such as recreation and tourism, range, minerals, and wildlife. In all cases, the community or county must also be within 100 miles of the boundary of national forest system lands.

## Uses and Restrictions

Eligible economically disadvantaged rural communities may request assistance in identifying opportunities that will promote economic improvement, diversification and revitalization. Assistance is coordinated through a community action team and plan. Programs may include upgrade of existing industries, development of new economic activity in non-forest related industries, technical assistance, training and education directed towards meeting the community's planned goals. Assistance requested will be coordinated with other USDA agencies and targeted to provide immediate help to those rural communities in greatest need.

## Contact

Northeastern Area-State & Private Forestry (CT, DE, IA, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, WI, WV)
(304) 285-1538

Northern Region (MT, Northern ID, ND, Northwest SD)
(406) 329-3230

Rocky Mountain Region (CO, KS, Northeast SD, Eastern WY)
(303) 275-5741

Southwestern Region (AZ, NM)
(505) 842-3344

Intermountain Region (Southern ID, NV, UT, Western WY)
(406) 329-3230

Pacific Southwest Region (CA, HI, Guam)
(707) 562-8910

Pacific Northwest Region
(503) 808-2346

Southern Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, PR, SC, TN, TX, VA)
(404) 347-7486

Alaska Region
(907) 271-2519

Int'l Institute of Tropical Forestry (Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands)
(787) 766-5335

National Program Office
Director, Cooperative Forestry
State and Private Forestry
Forest Service, USDA
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
(202) 205-1389; (202) 205-0975 - fax

# Environmental Justice Small Grants Program

## *Grants up to $20,000 to Assist Community-Based Organizations that Sponsor or Execute Projects to Address Local Environmental Justice Issues*

The Environmental Justice Program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides financial assistance to grassroots community-based groups to support projects to design, demonstrate or disseminate practices, methods or techniques related to environmental justice. Specifically, EPA will grant up to $20,000 in funding assistance for projects.

EPA identifies the following factors as particularly important in evaluating proposals: (1) The applicant s ability to manage the grant in compliance with EPA grant regulations; (2) The degree to which the health and economic well-being of the environment are adversely affected by environmental hazardous exposure; (3) The applicant s ability to inform others in the community of the information gathered; (4) Broad representation of affected groups and individuals in the community; and (5) The applicant group is incorporated. In general, the applicant must show awareness of the time commitment, resources and dedication needed to successfully manage a grant.

## Project Examples

The Comite de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agricolas in New Jersey received a grant of $20,000 to work with the community-at-large and local farmworkers to remedy the contamination of water in southern New Jersey, particularly the coliform contamination in migrant labor camps and the general nitrate contamination resulting from agricultural practices. This project will work through outreach and education of farmworkers and community members, working with grassroots organizations and health clinics that serve the migrant worker population.

A grant of $15,000 was awarded to Healing Our Mother Earth in California to hold a series of meetings to train primarily Spanish-speaking, low-income farmworkers to recognize symptoms of chemical poisoning and to encourage families to seek regular preventative medical check-ups to be screened for various health problems. The project will also provide education on how families can avoid or minimize exposure to dangerous toxins.

North Carolina Fair Share Education received $20,000 to develop community awareness and leadership training among community members in order to address the contamination of groundwater supplies resulting from dumping by corporate hog industries. The group will carry out education, training, monitoring, and surveying in the area to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and active participation among the predominantly rural, African-American, and low-to-moderate income residents.

The majority of the awards granted in 1996 served urban populations. However, there is no particular preference for funding projects in metropolitan areas.

## Application and Financial Information

The solicitation outlining the grant guidelines for each year is published in the Federal Register in mid-December. In addition, the national and regional program offices maintain mailing lists of organizations and individuals who receive the grant guidelines each December when published. You can contact one of these offices (see Contact below) to be placed on one of these lists.

Potential applicants are invited to submit a pre-proposal to their regional Environmental Justice Office (see listing of regional offices below). Applications should describe the planned program, the means for executing it, and preliminary budget information. The deadline for submitting pre-proposals is generally around March 1st.

Notification of awards is in August or September. Applicants selected for award may be requested to furnish additional information.
The project grant may be requested for one year. Activities must be completed within the time frame of the project's budget period.

For FY 1998, the total program budget was $2 million. For 1999 and 2000, the budget was cut to

$1.6 million per year. Most grants are for about $20,000.

## Eligibility

Community-based grassroots organizations, other incorporated nonprofit organizations and federally recognized Tribal Governments are eligible. Individuals may have their organizations, institutions, government or association apply. Nonprofit organizations must be incorporated to receive funds.

## Uses and Restrictions

Grant funds shall be used to support projects, programs or activities that promote environmental justice. Projects may include: 1) design, demonstration, or dissemination of environmental justice curricula, including development of education tools and materials; 2) design and demonstration of field methods, practices, and techniques, including assessment of environmental and ecological conditions and analysis of environmental and public health problems; 3) identification, assessment or improvement of a specific local environmental justice issue or a specific environmental problem; 4) provision of environmental justice training or related education for teachers, faculty, or related personnel in a specific geographic area or region.

Priority will be given to community-based/ grassroots organizations, tribes, and organizations whose projects will help improve the environmental quality of affected communities by a) developing an environmental justice project, activity, method, or technique that has wide application; b) enhancing the community's skills in addressing environmental justice issues and problems; and c) establishing or expanding environmental and public health information systems for local communities.

Funds cannot be used to acquire real property (including buildings) or construct or substantially modify any building. Funds also cannot be used for lobbying or underwriting legal actions.

## Contact

The Office of Environmental Justice s 24-hour hotline is (1-800-962-6215). Select the small grants option from the hotline s menu.

Region 1 (ME, VT, NH, MA, CN, RI)
Dr. Ngozi Oleru
(617) 918-1120

Region 2 (NY, NJ, PR, VI)
Melva Hayden
(212) 637-5027

Region 3 (MD, DE, WV, VA, PA, DC)
Reginald Harris
(215) 814-2988

Region 4 (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC,TN)
Connie Raines
(404) 562-9671

Region 5 (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)
Karla Johnson
(312) 886-5993

Region 6 (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)
Olivia Balandran
(214) 665-7257

Region 7 (IA, KS, MO, NB)
Althea Moses
(913) 551-7649

Region 8 (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)
Elisabeth Evans
(303) 312-6053

Region 9 (CA, AZ, HI, NV, GM, A.S.)
Romel Pascual
(415) 744-1212

Region 10 (AK, ID, OR, WA)
Joyce Crossen-Kelly
(206) 553-4029

Headquarters Office
Mary Settle, Small Grants Program Manager
Office of Environmental Justice (3103)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street SW, Washington, DC 20460
(202) 564-2594; (202) 501-0740 - fax
E-mail: settle.mary@epa.gov

## Internet

www.epa.gov/oeca/oejbut.html

# The Forest Service's Rural Development Program

## *Grants for Rural Community Capacity Building, Forest-Based Economic Development and Forest Resource Conservation-Based Technology Demonstration or Application*

The Forest Service s Rural Development program provides grants for technical assistance and matching funds for locally initiated and planned projects designed to stimulate improvements in the economic or social well-being of rural citizens through forest resources. Assistance is targeted to help strengthen, diversify and expand local economies experiencing long-term or persistent economic problems. Communities need not be dependent on Federal lands or forests to be eligible.

Rural Development is a program component of Rural Community Assistance (RCA), a core Forest Service effort since 1990. RCA, which includes Economic Recovery and Rural Development, is a broad-based effort aimed at helping rural communities capitalize on their potential to diversify and expand their economies through the use of natural resources, emphasize working through partnerships while developing long-term sustainable solutions to problems through local, community-based planning and action.

## Project Examples

Assisted the community of Grovetown, Texas, to evaluate and create commercial use for the formerly wasted endpieces of southern yellow pine boards from local mills. Chaia marimbas, formerly constructed only in Africa, are now being produced as true replicas, which create tones quite similar to the originals.

Assisted Woodcraft Network of Sedro Woolley, WA to organize itself and leverage several other sponsors. This successful network holds workshops, provides technical and business assistance to members, hosts or participates in retail and trade shows and serves as a network coordinator for small woodworking firms.

Helped to organize the Menominee Nation Tribal Enterprises (MTE), an award-winning forest-based business which thrives by producing what the forest has available at the right time, rather than just what the current market is demanding. MTE uses a strategic planning process that enables people to take control of their own lives and write their own plans, and helps focus business activities on sustaining the forest resource over the long term.

## Application and Financial Information

Assistance is available from the National Forest Supervisor s Offices and field offices of the Northeastern Area of the State and Private Forestry branch of the Forest Service, and the State Foresters staffs to aid in the preparation of applications. Funding decisions are based on community and regional priorities and are made in consultation with other state and local agencies and organizations. Average amount of grants range from \$5,000 to \$40,000. In fiscal year 1999, \$5.0 million was available for financial and technical assistance.

## Eligibility

Communities, state agencies, non-profits, educational institutions, businesses, and individuals are eligible to apply for financial assistance. Communities need not be dependent on federal lands or forests to be eligible.

## Uses and Restrictions

Criteria for grants vary among states and National Forests but typically involve community capacity building, forest-based economic development, and forest resource conservation based technology demonstration or application.

## Contact

For applications and information, contact the regional office of the Forest Service near you (see the contact list in the entry for Economic Recovery) or the state forester in your state s capital. Applications are not available from the National Office.

National Program Office
Director, Cooperative Forestry
Forest Service, USDA
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
(202) 205-1657; (202) 205-0975 - fax

# Resource Conservation and Development (RC& D)

## *Technical Assistance to Local Communities to Stimulate Economies and Natural Resources*

The Resource Conservation and Development (RC& D) program provides technical assistance to local communities (multi-county areas known as RC&D areas ) to improve their economies, natural resources, and living standards by coordinating conservation and rural development assistance available from USDA, other federal, state, and local sources. Basic to RC&D is the idea that local people know what is best for their communities. That s why RC&D areas are led by Councils comprised of local volunteers. RC&D areas currently blanket over half of the counties in the U.S. Through the program, USDA provides technical assistance in the form of a local staff person (an RC&D coordinator ) to support each multi-county RC&D area. The RC&D Council identifies the environmental, economic, and social needs of their area and sets project priorities objectives, goals, and the resources needed in an area plan. The RC&D coordinator, supported by USDA, serves the Council by helping complete project designs and get projects underway by locating the necessary resources. Most RC&D Councils are nonprofit organizations. They have broad authority to seek help from sources that are the best qualified to provide needed assistance. This help may be technical assistance from USDA agencies, State or local governments, local conservation districts, or private industry. Or assistance may be financial assistance such as donations, loans, grants, or cost-sharing arrangements.

RC&D activities include:

Finding uses for the natural resource base;

Developing natural resource based industries;

Protecting rural industries and people from natural resource hazards;

Improving water quality and make more water available,

Making the best use of local forest lands;

Creating and expanding forest-related industries;

Improving opportunities for recreation and tourism;

Educating people about natural resources;

Contributing to local economic development;

Creating and improving fish and wildlife habitat; and

Developing and improving wetland habitat.

## Project Examples

To better manage their forest resources, the Columbia RC&D is bringing together private businesses with state and federal agencies to focus on the special forest products industry. The RC&D provides a market for and processes locally-gathered mushrooms and florist ornamentals. These agroforestry projects have been incorporated under the name of RainKiss. The RainKiss Corporation provides a market for special forest products as an alternative to traditional timber extraction. The Columbia RC&D also has formed the Hybrid Cottonwood Growers Association, which is identifying diverse uses for products from cottonwood forests. The RC&D s efforts to promote innovative forest based businesses have resulted in the employment of more than 65 displaced timber workers.

*Direct Application of Recycled Paper on Cropland in Texas:* A partnership of the Big Country RC&D in Sweetwater, Texas, NRCS, EPA, USDA s Agricultural Research Service, National Soil Dynamics Laboratory and other national, state, and local partners are developing a process to utilize recycled paper to provide environmental benefits to production agriculture and create a new source of jobs in agricultural areas. The production of pelletized recycled paper will provide an alternative to putting paper in sanitary landfills and address nonpoint source pollution, wind erosion, and improve productivity of cropland soils.

*Wood Pellets to Heat Homes in Missouri:* To help create a new market for the timber business in the Ozarks and alleviate sawdust storage problems for local sawmills and wood products manufacturers, three Missouri RC&D areas (Top of the Ozarks, Big Springs, and Southwest Missouri RC&Ds) sponsored an incentive program for using wood pellets made from compressed sawdust to heat homes. This has helped exploit an under-utilized by-product, and has cut heating costs in many homes in the area. Wood pellets are a cleaner burning product, by creating less ash and smoke, and there is no creosote buildup. This was a cooperative effort of the Department of Energy, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and the Tennessee Valley Authority's Southeast Regional Biomass Energy Program.

*Composting Facility for Dead Poultry in North Carolina:* To protect the water quality and provide an inexpensive form of fertilizer for reuse on farms in North Carolina, the Region H RC&D area council built, operated, and evaluated a composting facility for dead poultry. The North Carolina Department of Agriculture Division of Veterinary Medicine, Horseshoe Farms, and several other organizations provided assistance in building and operating the facility, obtaining permits, and evaluating the health aspects of the demonstration project. The Region H RC&D Area Council will be producing an educational video program to educate the public about the composting system and to encourage use of the system.

## Legislative Authority

Section 1528-1538 of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981.

## Application and Financial Information

Written applications must be in the form suggested in the National Resource Conservation and Development Manual. Details of the procedure are available from State and field offices of NRCS. Authorization of applications is dependent upon the level of appropriations for the program. Funding available for RC&D areas in fiscal year 1999 was $35 million.

## Eligibility

State and local governments and nonprofit organizations with authority to plan or carry out activities relating to resource use and development in multi-jurisdictional areas. This program also is available in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam and the Mariana Islands.

## Contact

To find out about RC&D activities in your area, contact your local NRCS office. Check your telephone directory under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture.

National Program Office
NRCS
USDA - RC&D Division
Stop 2890, Room 6103-S
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-2890
(202) 720-0557; (202) 690-0639 - fax

## Internet

www.ncg.nrcs.usda.gov/rcnd_2.html

# Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (REDLG)

***Provides Zero-Interest Loans and Grants to Rural Electric and Telephone Utilities to Promote Economic Development and Job Creation***

The Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (REDLG) program makes direct zero-interest loans and grants to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) electric and telecommunication utilities who use the funds to provide financing for business and community development projects. Zero-interest loans are provided to finance a broad array of projects, including for-profit businesses. Grants are provided to the RUS utility to establish a revolving loan fund, which will finance such purposes as community development assistance, education and training for economic development, medical care, telecommunications for education, job training or medical services, business incubators and technical assistance. Program funds can be used for value-added projects.

## Project Examples

A $450,000 zero-interest loan was made to an electric utility in Iowa to pass through to a start-up value-added pork processing facility in Keokuk County, Iowa. The facility will cook and smoke pork products and package those products for targeted ethnic markets.

## Legislative Authority

Section 313 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended.

## Application and Financial Information

The USDA state offices of Rural Development generally are delegated loan approval authority on a case-by-case basis. Pre-application reviews and advice are available through state offices. Maximum awards are determined annually. For FY 2000, the maximum loan was $450,000 and the maximum grant was $200,000. Maturity for loans is a maximum of 10 years. Applications are scored on job creation potential, sustainability of projects, suitability to the area, diversification of employment in the area, amount of supplemental funds, relative income, and employment levels. The funding level for fiscal year 2000 for loans and grants was $15 million and $4 million, respectively. Estimated funding for FY 2001 for loans and grants is $15 million and $4 million, respectively.

## Eligibility

Only RUS electric and telecommunication utilities are eligible.

## Uses and Restrictions

Loans are provided to finance a broad array of projects, including for-profit businesses. Grants are provided to establish revolving loan funds to finance purposes such as community development assistance, education and training for economic development, medical care, telecommunications for education, job training or medical services, business incubators, and technical assistance.

## Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA s Rural Development Program (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the REDLG program (along with other business and community programs). For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development office or any Rural Development field office. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office
Mark Wyatt, Team Leader
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service
Specialty Lender Division
14th and Independence Ave, SW, STOP 3225
Washington, D.C. 20250
(202) 720-1400; (202) 720-2213 - fax
Email: mwyatt@rus.usda.gov

## Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/

# Urban and Community Forestry

## *Technical and Financial Assistance for Tree Planting, Care and Protection, Including Recycling and Urban Tree Waste Utilization*

Through the Urban and Community Forestry program the Forest Service provides leadership in the management of natural resources in urban and suburban areas to improve the quality of life and teach sound conservation principles that can be passed on to future generations. While the program has a broad focus, one of its objectives is facilitating the development of recycling and urban tree waste management and utilization technologies. This aspect of the program can help individuals and communities utilize residues from urban tree maintenance and removal in ways that create value-added business opportunities while conserving landfill space and solving other solid waste problems. By composting woody residues with food processing waste, for example, two components of the solid waste stream can be eliminated while creating valuable soil amendments and mulches.

## Project Examples

This program:

Assisted the organization and start-up of a composting station in Lindborg, Kan. This eliminated multiple sources of solid waste flow to the local landfill and extended its life into the next century.

Cost-shared the development of a program of the N.J. state forester to assist communities in sorting urban logs and tree residues into marketable product lines and selling them to local forest products producers. Published Recycling Street Tree Guide that documents ways communities can set up such programs.

## Legislative Authority

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, as amended

## Application and Financial Information

Assistance is available through State Forestry organizations. Each state issues its own application procedures. Funds are limited by availability and existence of congressional- or Administration-identified priorities. The federal contribution cannot exceed 50 percent of the total project.

## Eligibility

Cities, towns, municipalities, local governments, and non-government organizations are eligible.

## Uses and Restrictions

Priority is given to projects that build local capacity and have the support and involvement of communities and volunteer groups. Ordinarily not more than 20 percent of the total funds can be used to purchase, plant, and maintain trees.

## Contact

For applications and information, contact the Urban Forestry Coordinators in the regional offices of the Forest Service near you or the state forester in your state's capital.

Northeastern Area-State & Private Forestry (CT, DE, IA, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, WI, WV)
(603) 557-7688

Northern Region (MT, Northern ID, ND, Northwest SD)
(406) 329-3521

Rocky Mountain Region (CO, KS, Northeast SD, Eastern WY)
(303) 275-5742

Southwestern Region (AZ, NM)
(505) 842-3424

Intermountain Region (Southern ID, NV, UT, Western WY)
(801) 625-5189

Pacific Southwest Region (CA, HI, Guam)
(415) 705-1274

Pacific Northwest Region (OR, WA)
(503) 326-5602

Southern Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, PR, SC, TN, TX, VA)
(404) 347-1647

Alaska Region
(907) 271-2550

International Institute of Tropical Forestry
(Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands)
(809) 766-5335

National Program Office
National Program Manager
Urban and Community Forestry
USDA Forest Service
14th & Independence, SW
201 14th Street
Washington DC 20250
(202) 205-1374; (202) 205-1271 - fax

## Internet

www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop

# VII. Additional Resources

# Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

The goal of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) is to provide States with a financing mechanism for ensuring safe drinking water to the public. States can use federal capitalization grant money awarded to them to set up an infrastructure funding account from which assistance is made available to public water systems.

States develop a priority system for funding projects based on three criteria from the Act. States rank the projects and then offer loans to systems based on their ranking order. Priority is given to those eligible projects that: (1) address the most serious risk to human health; (2) are necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act; and, (3) assist systems most in need, on a per household basis, according to State-determined affordability criteria.

## Legislative Authority

Congress established the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) as part of the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Amendments.

## Application and Financial Information

Congress provided $1.275 billion in the DWSRF program's first fiscal year in 1997, and an additional $725, $775, and $820 million for fiscal years 1998, 1999, and 2000, respectively. The amount of funding each State was eligible to receive in 1997 was based on a formula used to award State program grants under the Public Water System Supervision program. The amount of funding available to each State in fiscal year 1998 and later years is based on the total eligible need determined for each State by the most recent Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released in January 1997. A new survey is underway in 1999.

Up to 15% of the capitalization grant (limited to 10% of the grant for any one activity) is available for local assistance and other eligible activities as described in the law. Activities are aimed at source water protection (including loans for land acquisition and conservation easements), capacity development and wellhead protection. States could also use part of the FY 1997 appropriation to fund required source water delineation and assessment activities.

Loans made under the program can have interest rates between 0 percent and market rate and repayment terms of up to 20 years. Loan repayments to the State will provide a continuing source of infrastructure financing into the next century. The program also places an emphasis on small and disadvantaged communities and on programs that emphasize prevention as a tool for ensuring safe drinking water.

Some special considerations within this fund are:

*Small Communities* The needs facing small communities are considerable. However, many public water systems serving these small communities, particularly those with populations fewer than 10,000, often find it difficult to obtain favorable interest rates when applying for loans to make infrastructure improvements. The SDWA Amendments target small communities for special consideration by the DWSRF program. States must provide a minimum of 15% of the available funds for loans to small communities.

*Disadvantaged Communities* For many communities, even the lower interest rate loans available through the DWSRF may be too high to make loans affordable. A State has the option of providing up to 30% of the grant awarded to the State to provide additional assistance to these State-defined disadvantaged communities. This assistance can take the form of lower interest rates, principal forgiveness, or negative interest rate loans. The State may also extend repayment terms of loans for disadvantaged communities to up to 30 years.

*Set-Asides for Other State Program Management Purposes* States have the flexibility to take set-asides for several different activities that can help develop their drinking water programs. A State can use up to 10% of its capitalization grant (with a 1:1 dollar State match) to support its State drinking water program, or to develop and implement capacity development, source water protection, and operator certification programs. Up to 2% of the grant may be set aside to provide technical assistance to systems serving communities with populations fewer than 10,000, and up to 4% of the capitalization grant may be set aside for costs associated with administering the DWSRF program.

## Eligibility

Both publicly and privately owned community water systems and non-profit non-community water systems are eligible for funding under the DWSRF program. Eligible projects include installation and replacement of failing treatment facilities, eligible storage facilities and transmission and distribution systems. Projects to consolidate water supplies may also be eligible.

## Contact

For more information about the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, consult the informational page for the program on the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water Internet website at www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf.html. To get the contact for the DWSRF Manager in a specific State, consult the contact list on the OGWDW website or contact the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators at (202) 293-7655 (www.asdwa.org). Information for the DWSRF and other drinking water issues is also available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or via email at hotline-SDWA@epa.gov.

The EPA DWSRF program is administered by:
Infrastructure Branch
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, SW (Mailcode 4606)
Washington, DC 20460
(202) 260-5526; (202) 401-2345 - fax

The Association of State Drinking Water
Administrators can be reached at:
1025 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 903
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 293-7655; (202) 293-7656 - fax

## Internet

www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf.html

# Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) of the USDA administers this program created to enable farmers to perform emergency conservation measures to control wind erosion on farmlands, or to rehabilitate farmlands damaged by wind erosion, floods, hurricanes, or other natural disasters, and to carry out emergency water conservation or water enhancing measures during periods of severe drought.

The program offers cost-sharing assistance for carrying out conservation practices. Any person who is owner, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper on a farm or ranch and bears a part of the cost of an approved conservation practice in a disaster area, is eligible to apply for cost-share conservation assistance.

In FY 1999, as a result of natural disasters and carryover work from previous years, $39,443,916 in cost-share and technical assistance was provided to farmers and ranchers in 42 states to help rehabilitate farmland damaged by drought, flood, hurricane, tornado and other natural disasters.

## Contact

Farmers should contact their local county FSA office after a natural disaster has occurred to determine eligibility for emergency cost-share assistance. Consult the local phone directory for location of the county FSA office.

National Program Office
Conservation and Environmental Programs Division
Emergency Conservation Program
USDA Farm Service Agency, Stop 0513
Washington, DC 20013
(202) 720-6221; (202) 720-4619

# Farm*A*Syst and Home*A*Syst

The Farm Assessment System (Farm*A*Syst) is a voluntary program that helps farmers and rural residents protect surface and groundwater by identifying pollution risks on their properties. Farm*A*Syst materials lead you through a self-assessment to examine farm and ranch activities, structures, and possible water contamination; identify potential problems; and map out strategies which will correct problems and reduce risks. Home*A*Syst is a similar program designed for non-farm, rural home owners. A Spanish language version of Farm*A*Syst is also available.

Farm*A*Syst operates through programs in each state, providing farmers with materials, technical assistance, and training for evaluating potential environmental hazards on the farm. The Farm*A*Syst worksheets enable you to evaluate numerous aspects of your farm s operation which can be potential sources of pollution: the well condition; pesticide and fertilizer storage and handling; petroleum tanks; hazardous waste management; household wastewater; livestock yards and waste management; silage; milking center wastewater; and croplands, pastures, and woodlots.

Once risks are known, you can develop an action plan to reduce or eliminate potential problems. By comparing risk levels from different pollution sources you can deal with the greatest pollution risks first, as time and money allow. Farm*A*Syst can also help you to identify who in the community can help with technical assistance, facility designs, supplies and equipment, regulations, and in some cases, financial assistance.

This inter-agency program is supported by federal funding from USDA-CSREES, USDA-NRCS, and U.S. EPA. State programs charge a nominal fee to cover duplicating costs for materials (usually less than $10.00).

## Contact

If you have access to the Internet, check the Farm*A*Syst web page (below) to identify the contact person for your state. You can also call the national office to obtain the name and phone number of the appropriate contact person for your state.

National Program Office
Farm*A*Syst / Home*A*Syst
303 Hiram Smith Hall
1545 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 265-0024; (608) 265-2775 - fax
E-Mail: farmasys@uwex.edu

## Internet

www.wisc.edu/farmasyst

www.wisc.edu/homeasyst

# Multiple Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI)

***Provides comprehensive protection against weather-related causes of loss and certain other unavoidable perils***

MPCI is the most common crop insurance policy available through the Federal Crop Insurance Program. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), which is overseen by the Risk Management Agency (RMA), underwrites crop insurance policies for a wide variety of crops in the United States. Crop insurance policies are sold and serviced by private insurance companies.

Coverage is available on over 76 crops in primary production areas throughout the U.S. at 50 to 75 percent of the actual production history (APH) for the farm. An indemnity price election from 60 to 100 percent of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation expected market price is selected at the time of purchase. Minimum Catastrophic Risk Protection (CAT) coverage is available for an administrative fee of only $60 per crop per county. A waiver of the CAT administrative fee is available for producers who qualify as small and limited resource farmers. MPCI coverage provides protection against low yields, poor quality, late planting, replanting costs and prevented planting.

Crops covered by MPCI are as follows: almonds, apples, beans (canning and processing) canola, citrus, citrus trees, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, upland cotton, extra long staple cotton, cranberries, dry beans, figs, Florida fruit trees, millet, nursery, peaches, peanuts, pears, peas, peppers, plums, popcorn, potatoes, prunes, raisins, rice, safflower, wheat, barley, oats, rye, flax, stone fruit, sugar beets, sugarcane, sunflower seeds, sweet corn (canning and freezing, and fresh market) tobacco, tomatoes(canning and processing), tomatoes (fresh market and walnuts).

MPCI benefits include cash-flow protection, good loan collateral, added confidence when developing crop marketing plans, stability for long-term business plans and family security. The Government shares in the premium costs.

## Information Available

A 19-page booklet Introduction to Risk Management: Understanding Agricultural Risks is available on request from RMA.

RMA also has outreach initiatives to ensure equal access and participation of women, minorities, and other traditionally underserved communities.

## Application and Financial Information

All MPCI insurance policies are available from private insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all county U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency offices.

Local crop insurance agents can describe the different insurance products available, and the policy rates and terms. The agent can assist in selecting the best coverage for the crop based on the particular farm operation, and risk management and budgetary needs.

## Uses and Restrictions

MPCI is a continuous policy and will remain in effect for each crop year following the acceptance of the original application. Producers may cancel the policy, a crop, a county, or a specific crop in a specific county, after the first effective crop year, by providing written notice to the insurance provider on or before the cancellation date shown in the applicable crop provisions. Producers must request policy changes from their insurance provider on or before the sales closing date for a change of price election or coverage level. In addition, requests to increase the maximum eligible prevented planting acreage above the limitations contained in the crop policy must be made by the sales closing date for the applicable crop. Contract changes involving a successor-in-interest application and corrections of a producer s name, address, identification number, administrator, etc. may be made at any time.

Each crop year the producer is required to submit an acreage report by unit for each insured crop. The acreage report must be signed and submitted by the producer on or before the acreage reporting date contained in the Special Provisions for the county for the insured crop. In the event of crop damage, producers should immediately notify their insurance provider of the damage.

## Contact

Risk Management Agency
USDA/RMA/Stop 0801
Room 3053-South
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250
(202) 690-2803; (202) 690-2818 - fax
RMA_mail@wdc.usda.gov

RMA also has 10 Regional Service Offices, in various locations across the country, that may be contacted for information specific to any area. Call (800) 205-9953 for the address of the nearest office.

Risk Management Agency Outreach Programs
Marie Buchanan, National Program Outreach Coordinator
USDA/RMA Stop 0801
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250
(202) 690-2686; (202) 690-2496 - fax

## Internet

www.act.fcic.usda.gov/pubs/rme/fsh_6.html

# National Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center

***Provides information to assist producers and agribusiness in complying with environmental regulations.***

The National Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center (Ag Center) is the first stop for information about environmental requirements that affect the agricultural community. The Ag Center was created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with the support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). While the USDA and other agencies provide educational and technical information on agricultural production, information on compliance with environmental requirements has not been readily accessible. The Ag Center was created to address this need.

Through its web site and other channels, the Center offers comprehensive, easy-to-understand information about compliance commonsense, flexible approaches that are both environmentally protective and agriculturally sound. The Center also provides information on reducing pollution and making good use of the latest pollution prevention technologies.

This Ag Center home page is the gateway to a large library of compliance information, as well as up-to-date news about related EPA programs and proposals. On most topics, the Ag Center offers publications that can be read online, downloaded, or ordered by fax or mail.

A broad selection of topic areas are addressed including pesticides, animal waste management, emergency planning and response, groundwater protection, surface water protection, fuel storage, and hazardous waste management.

## Information Available

News and Alerts: The Ag Center regularly compiles ag-related news items from EPA headquarters and regional offices and posts them on its web site and announces them through its list server (see below for instructions on how to subscribe). Particularly important items are more fully described on the web site under *Hot Topics for Agriculture*. In addition, the website contains separate compilations of ag-related news and alerts, including:

- items for which EPA is accepting comments,
- health & safety alerts,
- upcoming & recent compliance dates with links to compliance information,
- links to other sources of environmental compliance news.

The Ag Center continually updates its toll-free, automatic *fax-back* system for fact sheets and other publications. The toll-free number allows callers to order any of the more than 200 publications that the Center has assembled pertaining to compliance with environmental requirements. Call 1-888-663-2155 for up-to date information on environmental requirements that affect agriculture.

To subscribe to the Ag Center List Server, send the command, *subscribe agcenter Firstname Lastname* (Your first name and last name) in the body of an email message to the listserver at listserver@unixmail.rtpnc.epa.gov, with nothing in the subject line.

## Contact

The National Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center
Ginah K. Mortensen
901 North 5th St.
Kansas City, KS 66101
(888) 663-2155; (913) 551-7270 - fax

## Internet

www.epa.gov/oeca/ag

# National Science Foundation Center for Integrated Pest Management

*Integrated pest management is the reduction of pest problems by actions selected after the life systems of the pest are understood and the ecological as well as the economical consequences of these actions have been predicted, as accurately as possible, to be in the best interest of mankind.* R.L. Rabb and F.E. Guthrie, 1970

The Center for Integrated Pest Management is a National Science Foundation sponsored, Industry /University Cooperative Research Center, which works to support and further Integrated Pest Management through the evaluation of emerging technologies, information management and dissemination, environmental stewardship, estimation of economic consequences, resistance management tools and systems, and integration of disciplinary expertise. CIPM seeks to play a vital, national role in IPM research, education, and training.

The Center for IPM is located at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at North Carolina State University. While some basic funding come from the National Science Foundation, the majority of CIPM s budget for grants and general operations comes from membership funds provided by industry and commodity partners such as United Soybean Board, Novartis, Monsanto, and others.

The Center offers seed grants for novel research and extension projects in integrated pest management (IPM). Currently the Center is emphasizing research in IPM as related to the Food Quality Protection Act. . The Center does not fund research on social issues or product-specific programs. Priority topics for funding are established each year by the industry partners. These priorities and additional information on CIPM are made available to the public on the Center s web site. (see additional information below).

Funding is limited to $15,000/year. Most grants awarded range from $5,000 - $10,000 each year. Grants are for a maximum of three years (annual renewal based on results and availability of funds). Land grant institutions are the primary, though not sole, target for these funds.

## Contact

More information on Center history, membership, and recently funded projects can be found at the Virtual Center for IPM (see Internet web site below) or by calling (919) 515-1648.

National Program Office
Dr. Ron Stinner, Director
NSF Center for IPM
1017 Main Campus Drive
Partners 1, Suite 1100
NCSU Centennial Campus
Raleigh, NC 27606
(919) 513-1432; (919) 513-1114 - fax

## Internet

ipm.www.ncsu.edu/cipm/

# Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program Grants

Congress amended the Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1987 to establish the section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program because it recognized the need for greater federal leadership to help focus state and local nonpoint source efforts. Under section 319, states submit a draft grant application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), including a draft work plan for use of 319 funds for the fiscal year. Funds can be used by the state to support a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of both specific nonpoint source implementation projects and the overall state program. The federal contribution may not exceed 60 percent of the costs of a state program supported by these funds.

## Contact

Contact the lead agency in your state that oversees nonpoint source pollution issues.

National Program Office
US-EPA, Nonpoint Source Control Branch (4503 F)
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

## Internet

www.epa.gov/OWOW/NPS/guide.html

# Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)

***A national network of conservation and recreation-planning professionals who assist communities with nature-based recreation development and environmental, historic and cultural conservation.***

The National Park Service provides advisory assistance and counseling to projects that have established partnerships between government and citizens to increase the number of protected rivers, landscapes and trails nationwide. Projects should have clear, measurable objectives, must be designed to have a significant, cost-effective impacts on an issue and lead to tangible conservation of significant resources. Each project must demonstrate cooperation among affected public agencies and private interests and have significant public involvement.

RTCA is committed to assisting projects in ways that produce measurable, tangible results in a relatively short time. Information can be provided regarding a specific procedure or issue, or assistance is offered for developing long-term, working relationships with individuals and local communities.

RTCA provides the following types of assistance:

- *River, Trail and Greenway Planning*: RTCA helps communities move projects from idea to reality. Expertise is provided for ecology, consensus-building, trail design and river access. Assistance also is offered for harnessing public involvement to identify resources, understand the issues, set goals and choose among alternatives. RTCA also helps projects find ways to attract financial support leading to tangible results.

- *Regional Assessments*: Efforts to conserve natural places often need to be reconciled with other needs. Making choices in these cases is difficult. RTCA helps states or large metropolitan regions inventory and evaluate their significant river and trail corridors. Each assessment is tailored to specific regional needs and conditions. These assessments of natural, cultural, and recreational resources provide information that enables local officials and public and private landowners to make better decisions.

- *Conservation Workshops and Consultations*: RTCA provides training, advice, and information on river and trail conservation techniques. By working as a liaison, RTCA puts community members in touch with professionals and citizen groups that specialize in recreation, trail design, landowner liability, public involvement, and the economic benefits of conservation.

## Project Examples

Rivers & Trails assists locally led conservation efforts that:

- link parks, schoolyards, open spaces and residential areas with safe, quiet greenways;
- put sparkle back into neglected waterways;
- restore significant cultural and historic assets;
- recycle abandoned railways into trails that link neighborhoods and communities; and
- preserve open spaces for future generations.

## Legislative Authority

16 U.S.C. 1271-1287 The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
16 U.S.C. 1241-1249 The National Trails System Act
16 U.S.C. 4601-4601-3 The Outdoor Recreation Organic Act

## Application and Financial Information

Information and advice on many conservation and recreation topics are available from any National Park Service office (see addresses below). However, a group seeking longer-term assistance must formally apply for it. Successful applicants generally meet several criteria:

- An involved public: Conservation projects are more likely to succeed if they have broad public support. The RTCA program requires meaningful public participation in both planning and implementation of selected projects because full public involvement builds popular support

- Cost-sharing and Cooperation: Public agencies and private groups sponsoring a project must help fund it, with either cash or in-kind services. Usually, the larger the project, the smaller the Park Service share. At the beginning of each project, participants formally agree to cooperate as active partners.
- Results Orientation: Successful applications have specific, tangible, attainable goals. We work with communities to help them develop citizen groups and take actions that will achieve specific goals, such as building a trail, protecting a tract of fragile riverside land, or launching an annual river clean-up and festival.
- Significant Resources: Proposed projects should protect or enhance important community resources (such as rivers, trails, and landscapes) that will help to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

## Eligibility

Private nonprofit organizations and federal, state and local government agencies are eligible for assistance. Proposals must demonstrate commitment of cost-sharing which may include donations of time, cash and services. Proposed assistance is generally for one to two years.

## Contact

For more information on the RTCA program and procedures for requesting assistance, contact your regional National Park Service office or the Washington, D.C. headquarters, as listed below.

**Alaska Region**
2525 Gambell Street
Anchorage, AK 99503-2892
(907) 257-2650

**Intermountain Region**
Intermountain Support Office
12795 West Alameda Parkway
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-0287
(303) 969-2855
CO, MT, UT and WY

Santa Fe Support Office
1220 St. Francis Drive
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, NM 87504-0728
(505) 988-6091
AR, NM, OK, and TX

**Midwest Region**
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102-2571
(330) 657-2950
AR, IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD and WI

**Northeast Region**
Boston Support Office
15 State Street
Boston, MA 02109
(617) 223-5123
CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI, and VT

Philadelphia Support Office
200 Chestnut Street, 3rd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 597-1581
DE, MD, NJ, PA, VA, and WV

**Pacific West Region**
Pacific Great Basin Support Office
600 Harrison Street
Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94107-1372
(415) 427-1447
CA, HI, and NV

Seattle Support Office
909 First Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104-1060
(206) 220-4113
ID, OR, and WA

**Southeast Region**
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 562-3175
AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, and the VIRGIN ISLANDS

**National Program Office**
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
1849 C Street, NW (MS-3622 MIB)
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 565-1200; (202) 565-1204 - fax

## Internet

www.ncrc.nps.gov/rtca

# USDA/CSREES' Small Farm Program

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), an agency within the USDA, has a small farm program committed to meeting the needs of the small farm community. The goal of the CSREES program for small farms is to improve the income levels and economic viability of small farm enterprises in partnership with the land-grant university system, and public and private sectors, by encouraging research, extension, and education programs that meet the needs of small farmers and ranchers.

Small farm programs are conducted to help small farm families better use community services, improve financial management, develop markets, assist in estate planning, emphasize on-farm research and demonstration, and prepare family members for employment opportunities.

## Information Available

Small Farm Toll-free Number: 1-800-583-3071 This toll-free has been established by the Plant and Animal Systems Division of USDA-CSREES to give small farmers a much easier access and quicker response time to their questions or information inquiries on small farm issues. There is no cost involved with calling this hotline.

Electronic Mail Access: smallfarm@reeusda.gov The Small Farm mailing group was established in 1995 under USDA-CSREES-Plant and Animal Systems. This medium is used in exchanging small farm related information, to request ideas, share success stories, provide notice of events, publications, and a whole lot more. Anyone with interests in small farms is welcome to subscribe. To subscribe to the small farm mailing group, send a message to Majordomo@reeusda.gov In the body, type *subscribe smallfarm*. To unsubscribe to the small farm mailing group, send a message to Majordomo@reeusda.gov. In the body, type *unsubscribe smallfarm*.

Newsletter The Small Scale Agriculture Today's newsletter has been merged with the Small and Part Time Farms newsletter, to an entirely new stand-alone newsletter that will serve the readership needs of the land grant universities, public and private sectors, including the small farm communities nationwide. Call toll free: 1-800-583-3071 to subscribe to the Small Farm Digest or write to: Small Farm Digest, Stop 2220, USDA-CSREES, 868 Aerospace Center, 901 D Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250; Fax: (202) 401-5179

Publications The series of publications Getting Started in Farming can be obtained upon request. The series are: Getting Started in Farming; Mostly On Your Own; Part-Time or Small Farms; So You Have Inherited A Farm; Via The Home Farm; Small is Bountiful; Getting Started in Farming On A Small Scale (USDA Publication); Overview of Small Farm Programs at the Land Grant Colleges and Universities; Directory of State Extension Small Farm Contacts; Small Farm Digest, a quarterly publication; Proceedings of the National Small Farm Conference (1996); Getting Help for Your Small Farm from USDA; Brochure on Small Farm Program.

Factsheets Factsheets have been developed on a number of topics including: :

Aquaculture, asparagus, beekeeping, blueberries, brambles, American Ginseng, specialty corn, angora goats, cashmere goats, dairy and meat goats, specialty flowers, foliage plants, earthworm production, exotic fruits, herbs, exotic livestock, mushrooms, shiitake mushrooms, specialty mushrooms, northern nuts, organic farming, peppers, specialty potatoes, poultry, pumpkins, sheep, strawberries, specialty vegetables, wildflowers, and woodlots.

Small Farm Resource Guide A state-by-state guide to institutions, programs, and other resources useful to small farmers and those who serve them.

To obtain any of the listed items, write to the: Small Farm Program, USDA-CSREES, Plant and Animal Systems, Stop 2220, 901 D Street, S.W, 868 Aerospace Center, Washington, DC 20250; Toll free: 1-800-583-3071; Fax: (202) 401-5179.

## Contact

Denis Ebodaghe
National Program Leader   Small Farms
USDA-CSREES, Stop 2220
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-2220
(202) 401-4385; (202) 401-5179 - fax
e-mail: debodaghe@reeusda.gov

## Internet

www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm

The Small Farm Digest newsletter is available for viewing or downloading on this site. Other available items are the Proceedings of the First National Small Farm Conference, Overview of Small Farm Programs at the Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, the CSREES and Land Grant System s National Plan for Small Farms, the Small Farm Resource Guide, a national listing of farmers markets, and links to other useful sites.

# Wildlife Services (WS)

Wild animals contribute to our enjoyment of nature and outdoor recreation, but they can also damage property, agriculture, and natural resources and threaten human health and safety. WS responds to requests by the public and agencies in need of help in limiting wildlife damage. A Federal service program that shares costs with cooperators, WS has the authority to assist in solving problems that are created when wildlife cause damage.

Most of WS s efforts are conducted on private land in response to specific requests for assistance. After developing agreements with governmental and private-sector cooperators, WS provides help to prevent or reduce wildlife damage through two approaches: technical assistance and direct control.

WS acts as a protective buffer, guarding not only resources, but also wildlife and the environment when conflicts between humans and wildlife occur. When formulating control strategies, WS specialists consider protected or endangered animals, environmental impacts, the cost effectiveness of control methods, and social and legal concerns. Control strategies may include the application of one or more techniques, and consideration is first given to nonlethal methods when practical and effective. WS professionals provide biologically sound, effective, and accountable solutions to wildlife problems. In all instances, WS programs are conducted to ensure no lasting negative impact on wildlife populations. WS professionals strive to educate the public and producers about the importance of using responsible strategies for living with wildlife.

WS helps to reduce damage caused by wildlife to crops and livestock, natural resources, public and private property, and public health and safety. WS helps resolve bird hazards to aircraft; starling and blackbird contamination at feedlots; bird damage to aquaculture; urban starling and blackbird roosts; nuisance Canada geese; predation of waterfowl and livestock; beaver-flooding roads and damaging timber; deer damaging orchards, crops, and ornamental landscaping; bear destroying timber and beehives; wildlife-borne diseases, such as rabies and plague; and wildlife threats to endangered species.

WS professionals recommend and use an integrated wildlife damage management approach to reduce wildlife damage. This approach employs methods to prevent damage from occurring and to stop damage once it begins. All techniques used meet strict guidelines for safety, selectivity, and effectiveness. These methods may involve changing management practices, modifying habitat, dispersing animals, or removing wildlife. A combination of these approaches is generally used. WS s National Wildlife Research Center improves techniques available to WS and develops new methods for managing wildlife damage.

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## Contact

For more information about the wildlife services of WS, any State APHIS, WS office may be contacted. For the address and telephone number in your area, call the WS Operational Support staff at (301) 734-7921.

National Program Office
William H. Clay, Deputy Administrator
Wildlife Services
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Ag Box 3402
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3402
(202) 720-2054; (202) 690-0053 - fax

## Internet

www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/

# VII. General Information Sources

# The Consumer Information Center and Catalog

The Consumer Information Center (CIC) was established in 1970 to help federal agencies and departments develop, promote, and distribute consumer information to the public.

The CIC publishes a quarterly Consumer Information Catalog which is distributed to millions of consumers. Each issue has descriptive listings of more than 200 free and low cost booklets from over 40 different federal departments and agencies. These publications cover everything from pesticides to wildlife conservation, health to housing, from buying cars to building careers, from food to federal benefits. Requests for publications are generally filled within ten working days, with total time for delivery usually within four weeks.

## Contact

To get a free printed copy of the latest Consumer Information Catalog, send your name and address to: Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, CO, 81009 or call toll-free, 1-888-8-PUEBLO (1-888-878-3256)

## Internet

www.pueblo.gsa.gov/

You can read, print out or download all of CIC s publications on this site.

# National Agricultural Library Information Resource Centers

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## *Alternative Farming Systems Information Center*

One of several information centers at the National Agricultural Library, AFSIC specializes in locating, collecting and providing information about sustainable and alternative agricultural systems, new and industrial crops, and alternative crops.

AFSIC information specialists will answer questions; provide access to books, reports, journal articles newsletters, etc.; provide references to experts or organizations in a given region; identify researchers and research projects within USDA; and furnish free bibliographies and reference briefs.

### Contact

For more information, contact:
National Agricultural Library / Agricultural Research Service
AFSIC
U.S. Department of Agriculture
10301 Baltimore Ave., Room 304
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
(301) 504-6559; (301) 504-6409 - fax
afsic@nal.usda.gov

### Internet

www.nal.usda.gov/afsic

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## *Rural Information Center*

The Rural Information Center provides information and referral services to local government officials, community organizations, health professionals and organizations, rural electric and telephone cooperatives, libraries, businesses, and rural citizens working to maintain the vitality of America's rural areas.

### Contact

Rural Information Center
National Agricultural Library
10301 Baltimore Blvd. Room 304
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
ric@nal.usda.gov
1-800-633-7701; (301) 504-5181 - fax

### Internet

www.nal.usda.gov/ric

# U. S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Offices

ALABAMA
USDA Rural Development State Office
Sterling Center, Suite 601
4121 Carmichael Road
Montgomery, AL 36106-3683
T: (334) 279-3400 F: (334) 279-3403

ALASKA
USDA Rural Development State Office
800 West Evergreen, Suite 201
Palmer, AK 99645
T: (907) 745-2176 F: (907) 745-5398

ARIZONA
USDA Rural Development State Office
3003 North Central Avenue, Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85012
T: (602) 280-8701 F: (602) 280-8770

ARKANSAS
USDA Rural Development State Office
700 West Capitol, Room 3416
Little Rock, AR 72201-3225
T: (501) 301-3200 F: (501) 301-3278

CALIFORNIA
USDA Rural Development State Office
808 W 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
T: (530) 233-4615 F: (530) 233-8869

COLORADO
USDA Rural Development State Office
655 Parfet Street, Room E-100
Lakewood, CO 80215
T: (303) 236-2801 F: (303) 236-2854

DELAWARE-MARYLAND
USDA Rural Development State Office
4607 South Dupont Hwy
P.O. Box 400
Camden, DE 19934
T: (302) 697-4300 F: (302) 697-4390

FLORIDA
USDA Rural Development State Office
4440 NW 25th Place
P.O. Box 147010
Gainesville, FL 32614-7010
T: (352) 338-3400 F: (352) 338-3405

GEORGIA
USDA Rural Development State Office
Stephens Federal Building
355 E. Hancock Avenue
Athens, GA 30601-2768
T: (706) 546-2162 F: (706) 546-2152

HAWAII
USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 311
154 Waianuenue Avenue
Hilo, HI 96720
T: (808) 933-8380 F: (808) 933-8327

IDAHO
USDA Rural Development State Office
9173 W. Barnes, Suite A1
Boise, ID 83709
T: (208) 378-5300 F: (208) 378-5643

ILLINOIS
USDA Rural Development State Office
Illini Plaza, Suite 103
1817 South Neil Street
Champaign, IL 61820
T: (217) 398-5235 F: (217) 398-5337

INDIANA
USDA Rural Development State Office
5975 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46278
T: (317) 290-3100 F: (317) 290-3095

IOWA
USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 873
210 Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50309-2196
T: (515) 284-4663 F: (515) 284-4859

KANSAS
USDA Rural Development State Office
1200 SW Executive Drive
P.O. Box 4653
Topeka, KS 66604
T: (785) 271-2700 F: (785) 271-2708

KENTUCKY
USDA Rural Development State Office
771 Corporate Drive, Suite 200
Lexington, KY 40503
T: (606) 224-7300 F: (606) 224-7340

LOUISIANA
USDA Rural Development State Office
3727 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302
T: (318) 473-7920 F: (318) 473-7829

MAINE
USDA Rural Development State Office
967 Illinois Avenue
P.O. Box 0405
Bangor, ME 04402-0405
T: (207) 990-9100 F: (207) 990-9165

MASS/RI/CONN
USDA Rural Development State Office
451 West Street, Suite 2
Amherst, MA 01002-2999
T: (413) 253-4300 F: (413) 253-4347

MICHIGAN
USDA Rural Development State Office
3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200
East Lansing, MI 48823
T: (517) 324-5100 F: (517) 324-5225

MINNESOTA
USDA Rural Development State Office
410 Farm Credit Building
375 Jackson Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-1853
T: (651) 602-7800 F: (651) 602-7824

MISSISSIPPI
USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Suite 831
100 West Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39269
T: (601) 965-4316 F: (601) 965-5384

MISSOURI
USDA Rural Development State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Parkade Center, Suite 235
Columbia, MO 65203
T: (573) 876-0976 F: (573) 876-0977

MONTANA
USDA Rural Development State Office
PO Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771
T: (406) 585-2580 F: (406) 585-2565

NEBRASKA
USDA Rural Development State Office
152 Federal Building
100 Centennial Mall N
Lincoln, NE 68508
T: (402) 437-5551 F: (402) 437-5408

NEVADA
USDA Rural Development State Office
1390 South Curry Street
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Tarnsfield Plaza, Suite 22
790 Woodlane Road
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USDA Rural Development State Office
441 South Salina Street
Suite 357, 5th floor
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NORTH CAROLINA
USDA Rural Development State Office
4405 Bland Road, Suite 260
Raleigh, NC 27609
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220 East Rosser, P.O. Box 1737
Bismarck, ND 58502
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USDA Rural Development State Office
100 USDA, Suite 108
Stillwater, OK 74074
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101 SW Main Street, Suite 1410
Portland, OR 97204-3222
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USDA Rural Development State Office
1 Credit Union Place, Suite 330
Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996
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654 Munoz-Rivera Ave.
IBM Building, Suite 601
San Juan, PR 00918
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SOUTH CAROLINA
USDA Rural Development State Office
Strom Thurmond Federal Building
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Huron, SD 57350
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Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building
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WEST VIRGINIA
USDA Rural Development State Office
75 High Street, Rm 320
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4949 Kirschling Court
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